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Disability statistics

Joint report of the Secretary-General and the Washington Group on Disability Statistics

Summary

The present report, which was prepared in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2017/228 and past practices, provides an overview of activities by key stakeholders in the area of disability statistics. The report contains a section prepared by the United Nations, which describes activities of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the regional commissions and the World Health Organization (WHO) and a section prepared by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics describing its activities.

Points for discussion by the Commission are presented in paragraph 72.

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I. Introduction

1. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, contained in General Assembly resolution 70/1, pays significant attention to persons with disabilities in the context of development, particularly in line with the principles that no one will be left behind and to reach the furthest behind first. The 2030 Agenda recognizes persons with disabilities as one of the groups of vulnerable persons and calls for their empowerment. It also underscores that follow-up and review of the Agenda will require quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data to allow progress to be measured and to ensure that no one is left behind, as such data is key to decision-making. In this context, the 2030 Agenda commits to enhancing capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, in order to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data. Moreover, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 61/106) calls on States parties to that Convention to collect appropriate information, including statistical and research data, to enable them to formulate and implement policies related to the Convention and to identify and address the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in exercising their rights. States parties are encouraged to disseminate the statistics and ensure their accessibility to persons with disabilities and others.

2. Availability of data on disability has improved significantly over the years as the number of countries collecting data on disability in all parts of the world has progressively increased, starting in the early 1980s. This can be attributed mainly to continued international attention addressing the rights of persons with disabilities with the objective of streamlining disability into national development agendas. Nevertheless, there are still wide variations in estimates of disability both among countries and within countries over time. These observed differences bring into focus the diversity in national experiences and expertise across countries as well related cultural contexts within which the identification and measurement of disability takes place.

3. Critical decisions need to be taken so that countries can achieve tangible and measurable inclusiveness of persons with disabilities into national development programmes as required by the 2030 Agenda and the Convention. For monitoring purposes, there is an urgent need for high-quality and relevant statistics on disability, the issues stated in paragraph 2 above notwithstanding. It is recognized that a long-term strategy is required in order to develop a holistic approach so as to achieve fundamental improvements in the collection, analysis, dissemination and utilization of statistics on disability. States recognize in the 2030 Agenda that there are different approaches, visions, models and tools available to each country, in accordance with its national circumstances and priorities, to achieve sustainable development. In this context, it is imperative to have a long-term and coordinated strategy across all international partners for strengthening national capacity to generate robust statistics on disability for national planning and monitoring.

4. The present report describes ongoing and planned activities on disability statistics carried out by various offices of the United Nations and by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics, a city group under the aegis of the Statistical Commission. Points for discussion are presented in paragraph 72.

II. Ongoing and planned activities by United Nations organizations

A. Statistics Division

5. At the international level, the Statistics Division is responsible for the development of international statistical methodological standards, the compilation and dissemination of official statistics and the provision of technical assistance for strengthening national statistical capacity. Since May 2015, the Division has received funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Government of Australia for implementation of the disability statistics programme. Ongoing and planned activities on disability statistics by the Statistics Division are described below.

Regional meetings on disability measurement and statistics in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2020 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses

6. In 2016 and 2017, the Statistics Division, in collaboration with the regional commissions, organized six regional meetings whose objectives were to: (a) review and discuss national experiences regarding approaches taken to measure the population with disabilities during national censuses of the 2010 round, including challenges faced and lessons learned; (b) provide an opportunity to discuss strategies for compilation of data on disability for the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals; and (c) share national experiences among participating countries and facilitate intraregional cooperation aimed at enhancing national capacity in disability measurement and improving the quality of data for monitoring the Goals. The Division has so far organized the following meetings: South and South-East Asia in July 2016 for 19 countries; the Caribbean region in September 2016 for 14 countries; Africa in November 2016 for 14 English and French speaking countries; Arabic-speaking countries in March 2017 for 11 countries; the North and Central Asia region and Western Balkan States in June 2017 for 17 countries; and Latin American countries in June 2017 for 15 countries. Reports of and presentations made at the regional meetings are available on the disability statistics programme website at http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/disability/disab4.htm.

7. Some observations from the regional meetings include: (a) differences among countries in the questions that are being asked to identify the population with disabilities during national censuses with regard to the terminology used, the implied definition of the population to be identified, the number of items in the question(s), the response categories, and the use of and wording of screening questions; (b) differences in the type of respondent and the population covered in the collection of data on disability (e.g. inclusion or exclusion of children); (c) wide variations among regions in sources for data on disability, with some regions having strong reliance on censuses to collect data on disability and other regions making extensive use of multiple sources (censuses, administrative records, surveys) to compile data on disability; (d) recognition in all regions that administrative sources of data on disability should be strengthened and exploited; (e) acknowledgement by countries that in the context of the 2030 Agenda, an unprecedented amount of statistics would need to be produced by national statistical systems, requiring a data revolution that explores alternative sources of data as well as coordination of the system; (f) a general lack of the requisite formal national coordination mechanisms for all the necessary stakeholders in countries; and (g) a general lack of experts on disability statistics in

countries. These observations highlight the need for comprehensive statistical capacity development programmes that would strengthen national capacity in the collection, analysis, dissemination and utilization of data on disability in the countries.

Development of methodological guidelines

8. The Statistics Division, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, is updating the Principles and Guidelines for the Development of Disability Statistics,[1] which provide methodological guidelines to producers of disability statistics for improving the collection, compilation and dissemination and usage of data on disability. Compared with the current version, the revised guidelines highlight the importance of instituting a well-coordinated national policy to ensure effective demand for data, establishing a national statistical programme that responds to the policy data needs, measuring facilitators and barriers to functioning, and developing strategies to enhance the analysis, accessibility and utilization of data on disability in countries. The Division has constituted a group of experts for the revision of the Guidelines and organized a meeting in July 2017 to seek the views of the experts in identifying issues and areas where these guidelines should be revised or further enhanced.[2] The experts were chosen taking into account geographical representation in order to ensure international relevance of the revised guidelines.

Collection and compilation of national data and metadata on disability

9. The Statistics Division, in collaboration with regional commissions, is collecting, from national statistical offices, statistical data and supporting documents, such as questionnaires, from recent censuses, surveys and administrative sources. To date, the Division has collaborated with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The collected information will form the basis for analysis of national practices regarding disability measurement and for compilation and dissemination as data on the prevalence and characteristics of persons with disabilities.

Maintenance of website

10. The website of the disability statistics programme has been updated and is strategically located as part of one of the major work programmes[3] of the Statistics Division. The website is a resource centre for international exchange and sharing of technical knowledge and information in the area of disability statistics and measurement. The website also provides links to other relevant resources, including to the websites of the secretariat of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, WHO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Washington Group on Disability Statistics.

Other activities

11. The Statistics Division is providing substantive inputs for and is also coordinating the contributions of other stakeholders to a chapter on data on disability and opportunities and challenges, which will be included in an upcoming flagship

[1] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/pubs/gesgrid.asp?id=269.

[2] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/meetings/2017/new-york--disability-egm/.

[3] http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/default.htm.

report in 2018 on disability and development and realizing the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with persons with disabilities. The chapter covers current efforts by countries to measure disability and identifies strategies to enhance national capacity to meet data demands for disability-inclusive development.

Planned activities

12. The Statistics Division plans to organize a second meeting in July 2018 for the group of experts to review a draft of the revised Guidelines and Principles for the Development of Disability Statistics. When finalized, the revised guidelines will be used in training workshops aimed at building national capacity to collect data on disability in accordance with international standards.

13. The collection of data from countries will be continued during 2018. The arrangement to collect the data in collaboration with the regional commissions is intended to minimize duplication of effort and avoid overburdening countries with multiple requests for the same data. In some instances, the Statistics Division will contact countries directly to obtain the data.

14. The Statistics Division plans to organize more regional meetings that bring together senior experts responsible for disability statistics from national statistical offices and senior officials from institutions that are responsible for national policy on disability, as well as participants from some organizations of persons with disabilities. The main objective of the meetings is to review the existence of national coordinated mechanisms for producing and utilizing disability data for policy purposes and identify gaps and strategies for strengthening national capacity.

15. The website will continue to be developed incrementally and currently has both recent and some dated information that will either be replaced or supplemented with new information as it becomes available.

B. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

16. While all countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are collecting statistical information on the situation of persons with disabilities, the heterogeneity in the criteria used for measuring disability, including variations in the definition of disability and variations in the application of international guidelines, including the sets of questions recommended by the Washington Group, make it necessary to strengthen the capacity of national statistical offices and promote a greater harmonization of data-gathering processes. ECLAC is actively working to improve the quality and comparability of data, by serving as the technical secretariat for the Disability Measurement Working Group of the Statistical Conference of the Americas and by providing technical assistance on disability measurement, as requested, by ECLAC member States.

17. With the support of ECLAC, the Disability Measurement Working Group fulfilled its mandate for the 2014–2017 period with the preparation of a report that details disability measurement procedures in Latin America and the Caribbean[4] and the organization of two regional workshops, one focused on the application of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health[5] and the other on

[4] https://www.cepal.org/deype/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/0/53340/LCL3860e.pdf

[5] https://www.cepal.org/deype/ceacepal/2017-CE16/DDR/CE16-GTMD-Informe-seminario1-09-2016.pdf

the application of the Washington Group sets of questions with a view to the next census round.

18. For the biennium 2018–2019, the Disability Measurement Working Group aims to: (a) improve the technical capacity of countries in the region to collect and disseminate International Classification of Functioning-based disability data in line with international recommendations such as those of the Washington Group, the Statistics Division, WHO, UNICEF and the International Labour Organization (ILO), among others; (b) develop a methodological/conceptual proposal related to the design and execution of statistical projects to generate information on disability in the countries of the region; (c) provide technical guidance to the countries of the region to strengthen the inclusion of disability in the next census round, based on international recommendations; and (d) build a support network among institutions, national and international agencies (including other working groups of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, such as the Census Working Group and the Working Group on Statistics on Children and Adolescents), experts and users and generators of statistical information on the population with disabilities.

19. The specific activities that will be carried out to achieve these objectives include: (a) the preparation of methodological proposals to support the application of international recommendations for the measurement of disability in censuses and other data-gathering instruments during the first half of 2018; (b) a meeting, towards the end of 2018 or in the first quarter of 2019, to exchange experiences on disability measurement, based on the census pilot tests carried out during 2017 and 2018; and (c) during the second half of 2018, the creation of a directory of officials of national statistical offices, disability offices and councils or ministries responsible for producing data on disability in the region, and a directory of international organizations that have developed or participate in methodologies for measuring disability. The updated directories will be available on the webpage of the Disability Measurement Working Group, along with other reference materials. These activities have potential for collaboration with the Statistics Division given its central role at the international level.

20. ECLAC will also provide technical assistance to member States in preparation for the 2020 census round. ECLAC is currently reviewing the disability-related questions in the census questionnaires of Guatemala and Argentina. Finally, in December 2017, ECLAC led a training workshop in Costa Rica at the request of the national disability council (CONAPDIS) on producing indicators to assess the human rights situation of persons with disabilities in the country.

21. ECLAC will contribute to the review of the Guidelines and Principles for the Development of Disability Statistics by providing examples of national experiences and good practices in the use administrative records from Latin America. In order to gather experiences from the countries of the region, a virtual seminar will be organized and the outcome report of the seminar will serve as the basis for the input.

C. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

22. The work of ESCAP on disability statistics falls within the realm of the implementation plan for the regional strategy to improve population and social statistics in Asia and the Pacific, which was endorsed by the ESCAP Committee on Statistics at its fifth session, in December 2016. The implementation plan sets out a framework that can be used to identify issues related to capacity-building on disaggregated data in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. More

specifically, the framework identified three broad areas of work, namely: (a) establishing an enabling policy environment to create and sustain demand for statistics for inclusive development; (b) strengthening production and dissemination of data; and (c) enhancing accessibility and use of statistics to inform policy debates.

23. The Regional Steering Group on Population and Social Statistics at its first meeting, held in Bangkok from 28 August to 1 September 2017, finalized a workplan in line with the three broad areas of work. Through a systematic focus, beginning with the creation of an enabling policy environment and strengthening national indicator frameworks as a critical link between policy issues and data improvement, ESCAP plans to identify and disseminate specific strategies for promoting efficient national production and utilization of data on persons with disabilities, among other population groups. The basic tenet is to ensure that the data is responsive to national disability policy priorities. The process will thus require the engagement not only of national statistical offices and statistical units within line ministries, but also other relevant national agencies such as national disability policy agencies, civil society partners and organizations of persons with disabilities, leading to the development of more integrated and comprehensive disability data production systems.

24. The Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, a policy framework for the region, not only enshrines the principle of disability-inclusive development, it provides the region and the world with the first set of regionally agreed disability-specific development goals and targets, accompanied by indicators to enable progress tracking. Goal 8 of the Incheon Strategy focuses on improving the quality of disability data. The recent high-level intergovernmental meeting on the midpoint review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, held in Beijing from 27 November to 1 December 2017 and organized by ESCAP in cooperation with the China Disabled Persons' Federation, discussed the importance of generating baseline data as a starting point to track progress on disability-inclusive development. Persisting challenges for disability data production include the lack of a common understanding of concepts and operational definitions related to disability among relevant national stakeholders, the need to shift away from the medical to the biopsychosocial model in improving disability data and resource constraints for data collection. Participants emphasized the importance of political will and multi-stakeholder engagement as critical means to improve disability data. In addition to calling for increased harmonization between various questions and instruments that were available internationally for disability data collection, the meeting also called for exploring and harnessing non-traditional data sources and innovative approaches, such as geospatial information, to enhance disability data production.

25. The outcome document of the meeting, the Beijing declaration and action plan to accelerate the implementation of the Incheon Strategy, called upon Governments to map the status of disability statistics across ministries and develop and implement national action plans to improve the reliability and usability of disability data. It also called upon Governments to examine the concepts, purposes, targets and advantages of existing disability data collection tools and instruments through censuses and surveys, including the tools developed by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics for measuring disability, those developed by the Washington Group and UNICEF for measuring child disability and the WHO model disability survey. The declaration further calls on Governments to establish or improve national registers and civil registration and vital statistics systems as viable sources of data on disability. Sustainable resource allocation for building statistical capacity in disability data collection was highlighted as a critical means to improve data on disability.

26. ESCAP has been working closely with the Statistics Division to organize regional and subregional meetings in Asia and the Pacific. Meetings covering national statistical offices and national disability policy agencies in South-East Asia, South and South-West Asia and East and North-East Asia (in 2016) and North and Central Asia (in 2017) compiled national experiences and identified challenges faced and lessons learned in measuring disability from different sources of data, including the last round of the population and housing census, in addition to identifying the way forward towards the compilation of data on disability for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals.

27. In line with the above ongoing and planned activities to improve disability data in the Asia-Pacific region, ESCAP will continue to collaborate with the Statistics Division in the revision of the Guidelines and Principles for the Development of Disability Statistics, with case studies and experiences gathered through the regional work serving as inputs for various components of the Guidelines and Principles, and in organizing a meeting/capacity-building workshop for countries in the Pacific subregion with objectives similar to the previous meetings conducted in the period 2016/17.

D. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

28. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) initiated its disability programme in 2016 and implemented three interlinked activities in the region between 2016 and 2017. The first activity, initiated in June 2016, was to compile national data on disability through a questionnaire on disability statistics and make an assessment of practices used to implement various collection tools. The compiled information provided a wealth of data on persons with disabilities. In addition, it revealed a need for capacity-building efforts to address various national implementation practices. The second activity was to organize an expert group meeting on disability measurement and statistics in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2020 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses in collaboration with the Statistics Division, which was held in Muscat in March 2017. The third activity was to organize a regional workshop on improving disability statistics in the Arab countries, held in Casablanca, Morocco, in April 2017, in collaboration with the Washington Group. The workshop focused on best practices for implementing the Washington Group short set of questions and reviewed challenges encountered in collecting disability statistics and improvements to practices to implement the short set of questions. A technical publication (a regional guidebook to improve disability data collection and analysis in the Arab countries) is the outcome of these three activities.

29. As an outcome of the activities described above, ESCWA, in collaboration with national statistical offices, published an online bulletin on Arab disability statistics in numbers for 2017 based on national data, harmonized to the extent possible to allow for regional analysis, based on different sources. The bulletin presents figures concerning the situation of persons with disabilities in comparison with those with no disabilities. The bulletin will be updated periodically as countries collect more disability statistics. The scope of areas covered will also be expanded to allow further in-depth analysis in the future.

30. In collaboration with the Washington Group, ESCWA developed the first guidebook at the regional level to improve disability data collection and analysis in the Arab countries implementing the Washington Group questions. The guidebook

aims to improve the collection, analysis and availability of data on persons with disabilities by providing guidance on how to standardize implementation of the Washington Group questions and related indicators. The guidebook has six chapters and includes topics on the following: (a) the role of disability statistics in policy analysis; (b) the concept of disability and its implication for designing disability data collection efforts; (c) the Washington Group disability data collection tools; (d) implementing the Washington Group questions and best practices for data collection; (e) measuring prevalence and analysing disability data; and (f) summarizing Arab-region experience in data collection and recommendations to improve data collection methods and to capture the majority of people with disabilities.

E. World Health Organization

31. WHO has a long-lasting tradition in the conceptualization and measurement of disability and achieved an important milestone with the endorsement of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health by all WHO member States at the fifty-fourth World Health Assembly, in 2001 (resolution WHA54.21). WHO has been engaged in the measurement of functioning and disability in a number of data collection efforts, including: (a) the multi-country survey study; (b) the World Health Survey; (c) the study on global ageing and adult health; and (d) the WHO disability assessment schedule. WHO is presently supporting member States to collect disability and functioning data at the population level using the model disability survey, which is a general population household survey.

Model disability survey

32. The model disability survey was developed by WHO and the World Bank in 2012, in collaboration with a range of stakeholders from other international organizations, leading researchers and persons with disabilities and their collective organizations, to support WHO member States in establishing and strengthening their monitoring and evaluation systems for disability, as requested by the World Health Assembly in 2013 (resolution WHA66.9) and the WHO global disability action plan 2014–2021, adopted by 194 member States at the sixty-seventh World Health Assembly, in 2014. The model disability survey is designed to identify and address barriers and unmet needs, to formulate policies and evidence-based national disability strategies and to help assess progress made by States parties' in respect of their obligations regarding the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

33. The model disability survey is fully grounded in the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health and conceptualizes disability as the outcome of the interaction between health conditions and the physical, human-built, attitudinal and sociopolitical environment of a person. Disability is therefore not only an individual attribute based on the presence of health conditions and impairments, but a multidimensional experience generally characterized by limitations in functioning in multiple life areas, such as problems with mobility, self-care, communication or work depending on how impairments and health conditions play out in a person's real-life environment.

34. The model disability survey also conceives disability, in line with the International Classification of Functioning, as a continuum, ranging from no disability, to low and to very high levels of disability. Disability is thus a matter of

degree: any person with health conditions or age-related decline in health will experience disability to some extent at some point in life.

35. To capture and describe disability from a comprehensive perspective, the model disability survey has three core modules: environmental factors (targeting barriers and unmet needs), functioning and disability, and health conditions and capacity. Five additional modules provide information about relevant indicators: sociodemographic characteristics, work history and benefits, health care utilization, well-being and empowerment.

36. The development of the model disability survey included a one-year preparatory phase to inform the selection of domains and questions: 179 health and disability surveys implemented worldwide since 2001 were assembled and mapped to the International Classification of Functioning and a selection of these underwent data analyses. The preliminary draft of the model disability survey was then reviewed at an expert meeting, held in December 2012 and attended by 28 international stakeholders from 20 countries. The alpha version of the survey was subsequently proposed and underwent three rounds of cognitive testing (between 2013 and 2015) in different countries and languages. Two major pilot studies were carried out, in Cambodia in 2014 and in Malawi in 2015. Pilots were used to test the structural validity of the disability scales and the overall performance of the tool.

37. Two versions of the model disability survey are currently available: a standalone version that is ideal for a dedicated survey on disability and a brief version that could be used as a module to be integrated into existing household surveys.

38. The brief version of the model disability survey module was developed in 2016, following extensive analysis of data from pilot and national datasets, consultations with international experts and engagement of people with disability, to meet calls from member States for a version of the survey that would be appropriate for integration into existing and regularly implemented household surveys, such as labour force or living standards and expenditure surveys. The brief version of the survey allows a continuous monitoring of the distribution of disability in populations and makes a disaggregation of indicators by level of disability possible, as required for the Sustainable Development Goals.

39. In 2015, the model disability survey was implemented nationwide as a dedicated disability survey in Chile and Sri Lanka. In 2017, further nationwide implementations in the Philippines and Qatar followed. The survey was also implemented regionally, in Cameroon in 2016 (Adamawa) and in Pakistan in 2017 (Baluchistan) and piloted in Dubai, United Arabic Emirates, in preparation for its full implementation in 2018. The brief version of the survey will be implemented in 2018 in India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Tajikistan through an existing data collection platform.

40. WHO provides member States with technical support throughout the implementation process, with a strong focus on sustainable capacity-building strategies for national or regional statistical offices. For instance, the approach used by WHO to analyse disability data and create valid disability scales with cardinal properties has been already applied by the National Statistical Office of Chile to other surveys. Workshops for interviewers and on data analysis have been conducted so far in Cambodia, Chile, Oman, Panama, Pakistan, the Philippines, Qatar, Sri Lanka and the United Arab Emirates. Materials for the model disability survey, including the questionnaires and an interviewer manual, are available either at http://www.who.int/disabilities/data/mds/en/ or on request.

41. The brief and long versions of the model disability survey enable disaggregation of all other outcomes of interest, such as employment, income and education, by disability status. It further enables this disaggregation by severity of disability. When the brief version of the survey is included in other surveys such as labour force, living standards or multi-topic surveys, it enables direct comparisons of these outcomes between persons with varying levels of disabilities and those without. The survey also enables countries to go beyond disaggregation, in making progress towards the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and identify the right policy and programmatic actions to reduce inequalities and monitor the impact of these policies over time.

Planned activities

42. Workshops with statistical offices, health authorities and WHO regional and country offices are planned for 2018 in the six WHO regions of the world. These workshops aim to disseminate the model disability survey and encourage the use of the standalone survey as a dedicated disability survey and of the brief version of the survey as a disability module, especially in light of the need of disaggregate Sustainable Development Goal indicators by disability.

43. WHO will support launching events in 2018 in Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, to officially present findings of the model disability survey to country authorities, advocacy and support organizations, academics, researchers and the media. These events are structured to facilitate the uptake of results from the survey in the development of evidence-based national disability strategies and policies.

44. WHO regularly uses and recommends the Guidelines and Principles for the Development of Disability Statistics to countries and is committed to contributing to their revision by the Statistics Division in 2018.

III. Washington Group on Disability Statistics

45. The Washington Group on Disability Statistics was constituted as a city group under the Statistical Commission in 2001 and held its first meeting in 2002. The Group was established to address the urgent need for improved and internationally comparable disability statistics. A major objective of the Group is to provide basic necessary information on disability that is comparable throughout the world. Currently, the Group has over 130 country members and 10 affiliate members. A total of 17 annual meetings have been held using a regional rotation system to facilitate attendance by all member countries. The 2016 meeting was held in Pretoria, hosted by Statistics South Africa, and the 2017 meeting was held in Sydney, Australia, hosted jointly by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Government of Australia. The following section of the report will briefly review accomplishments of the Washington Group, but will focus on its work since it last reported to the Commission, in 2016.

46. To date, the Washington Group has developed a short set and an extended set of questions and, in collaboration with UNICEF, has developed a module on child functioning. All question sets were designed to be added to censuses or surveys. Work is continuing on the development of a module on inclusive education in collaboration with UNICEF and on disability and employment in collaboration with ILO.

Information on these tools is provided below. Most recently, the Group has been engaged in building disability data collection and analysis capacity at the country and regional levels. With funding from the Government of Australia, the Group's website has been redesigned to optimize accessibility and now contains a series of updated documents, a section on frequently asked questions and a growing number of blogs to assist data collectors and users as they adopt the question sets and analyse the resulting data. In addition, also with funding support from Australia, the Group has initiated regional and other workshops focused on the implementation of its data collection tools. Detailed information on the Washington Group and the rationale, development, testing and use of all its tools can be found at www.washingtongroup-disability.com.

Washington Group short set of questions

47. The Washington Group short set of questions is a set of six questions designed to identify (in a census or survey format) people with a disability, namely those at greater risk than the general population for participation restrictions due to the presence of difficulties in six core functional domains, if appropriate accommodations are not made (see www.washingtongroup-disability.com/washington-group-question-sets/short-set-of-disability-questions/). Responses to each question are captured using four graded answer categories: no difficulty, some difficulty, a lot of difficulty, or cannot do. The six questions and four answer categories allow for the calculation of estimates for the level of functioning within each domain or among different combinations of domains. The tool should be used in conjunction with other data collection activities, that is by including the Washington Group short set of questions within a larger survey or registration form to enable disaggregation of outcome measures (employment status, educational attainment, etc.) by disability status.

48. The questions can also be combined to create a set of disability status indicators that describe different levels of functional ability based on the choice of graded thresholds. The short set of questions is especially well suited for disaggregating the Sustainable Development Goals. It creates an intuitively well understood, internationally comparable distinction between people with and without disabilities, namely people who have a lot of difficulty or who cannot do at least one of six core functional domains. Simply by adding the short set of questions to an existing survey allows for the disaggregation of all indicators generated by that survey.

49. Since its adoption in 2006, the Washington Group short set of questions has been:

- Used in censuses or surveys in over 80 countries
- Promoted by international aid programmes (Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia), as the means to collect disability data in all programmes and projects
- Introduced as a means for collecting disability data in the Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses (rev. 3) and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Conference of European Statisticians recommendations for the 2020 censuses of population and housing
- Included in the demographic and health surveys of the United States Agency for International Development and the UNICEF multiple indicator cluster surveys
- Included in 70 surveys sponsored by the World Bank

- Adopted by ESCAP as a way of identifying people with disabilities for constructing their Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real" indicators
- Adopted by Development Initiatives in its P20 effort on monitoring outcomes for the world's poorest 20 per cent.

50. The Washington Group short set of questions has been supported or recommended for use in disaggregation by disability status for the Sustainable Development Goals, including in:

- Joint statements by United Nations organizations including: UNICEF, ILO, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women); international disability consortiums (International Disability Alliance and International Disability and Development Consortium); the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia; and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities to the fourth (Geneva, November 2016) and fifth (Ottawa, March 2017) meetings of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators
- Global Action on Disability Network meeting communiqué (2 and 3 March 2017, Berlin)
- Statistical Commission, in its report on the forty-eighth session (decision 48/109, on social statistics, para. (g))
- 25 Member States in a statement at the tenth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

51. The Washington Group set of short questions has been used by:

- United Nations organizations: OHCHR, UNICEF, ILO, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Fund, UN-Women and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities
- International NGOs: Handicap International, Sightsavers, CBM
- Academia.

Washington Group extended set of questions

52. Because the Washington Group short set of questions was initially designed for inclusion in censuses, it was necessarily brief and therefore identifies most, but not all, people with disabilities (in particular it was not designed to directly identify persons with psychosocial disabilities).

53. The extended set of questions includes domains that could not be included in the short set, obtains more information on some domains than are provided by the short set and obtains information on the use of mobility assistive devises in order to assess functioning.

54. In addition to the six domains of the short set of questions, the extended set also includes the following functional domains: affect (anxiety and depression), pain, fatigue and upper body functioning. As with the short set of questions, the extended set of questions have scaled response categories so that the level of functioning in each domain can be described. The domains can also be combined to create disability status indicators capturing different levels of difficulty in functioning.

Washington Group/International Labour Organization module on disability and employment

55. Promoting equal opportunity and treatment in employment is a central element of the ILO decent work agenda. The ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization of 2008 indicates that various forms of equality and non-discrimination must be considered to be cross-cutting issues in the strategic objectives of decent work.

56. While necessary to address the strong policy interest in establishing and monitoring the effectiveness and impact of national legislation, programmes or policies to promote equal employment opportunity and treatment in employment for people with disabilities, comprehensive data on the employment situation of this population group is rarely available at the required level of detail and periodicity. Significant activities are needed to increase national capacity to venture into new data collection initiatives, as well as to increase the frequency of data collection. The Washington Group and ILO therefore collaborated to produce a new module on disability and employment for inclusion in labour force surveys. This module was designed to be as compact as possible while still being able to produce a useful set of indicators on disability and employment.

57. The module is currently undergoing cognitive testing and covers the following:

- Disability identification (the Washington Group short set of questions plus two additional questions on upper body mobility that focus on lifting and using one's hands and fingers), date of onset and barriers that limit work behaviour
- Accommodation
- Attitudes
- Social protection (receipt of cash or in-kind benefits related to disability).

Washington Group/United Nations Children's Fund child functioning module

58. As the main global advocate for children, UNICEF has played a leading role in providing the world with current, high-quality information on the well-being of children, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable. As a first step in addressing the need for comparable data on children with disabilities, UNICEF supported the collection of data on this topic through the multiple indicator cluster survey starting in 2000 until the mid-2000s.

59. The Washington Group determined that a special set of questions devoted to measuring child functioning was needed to address the aspects of child development not addressed in previous methods. To attend to the unique situation of children, the Washington Group, in collaboration with UNICEF, embarked upon the development of a separate module that would specifically address child functioning.

60. The questions of the child functioning module follow the same principles as the Washington Group short and extended modules: to determine "disability" through a series of questions on difficulty of functioning that would place a child at risk of participation restrictions in a non-accommodating environment. The module is composed of two sub-modules: one for children 2–4 years of age and another for children 5–17 years of age. Domains of functioning include: seeing*, hearing*, walking*, communicating*, learning* and remembering, self-care (feeding and

dressing), upper body functioning*, behaviour*, emotions (anxiety and depression), coping with change, focusing attention, playing* and relationships.[6]

61. Where appropriate, domains in the child functioning module mirror those included in the short and extended sets of questions, but the questions are formulated differently to be suitable for use on children. The child's mother or, if the mother is not alive or she is not living with the child, the primary caregiver is the recommended respondent for this module.

62. The module on child functioning was launched in October 2016 and is currently available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese. The module on child functioning and the Washington Group short set of questions (for the population aged 18 and above) have been incorporated into UNICEF-supported multiple indicator cluster surveys (see also below). UNICEF has conducted regional capacity-building workshops to support disability statistics for children.

63. The child functioning module has been supported or recommended for use in disaggregation by disability status for the Sustainable Development Goals, including in:

- Joint statements by United Nations organizations including: UNICEF, ILO, OHCHR and UN-Women; international disability consortiums (International Disability Alliance and International Disability and Development Consortium); the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia; and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities to the fourth (Geneva, November 2016) and fifth (Ottawa, March 2017) meetings of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators
- Global Action on Disability Network meeting communiqué (2 and 3 March 2017, Berlin)

United Nations Children's Fund/Washington Group module on inclusive education

64. To support the promotion of the right to education for children with disabilities through cross-nationally comparable data, UNICEF and the Washington Group are working on the development of a survey module on inclusive education to assess the school environment and participation. The purpose of this set of questions is to provide information that can inform policy, provide a statistical summary of environmental influences on participation in school and identify key areas with bottlenecks that can be followed up on. The questions focus on education through a formal mechanism (as opposed to home school or tutoring) and are designed to capture the interaction between the participant and the environment by obtaining parental responses to questions across three participatory domains.

65. The first set of questions is intended for the general adult population, with the purpose of capturing attitudes towards education for all children, and specifically for children with disabilities. The second section is meant to be administered to caregivers of children who are attending school. It includes questions that evaluate the accessibility of the physical space, the curriculum and other aspects of the school environment such as teachers' attendance, availability of toilet facilities and access to social activities. The final component focuses on out-of-school children and attempts

[6] Domains marked with an asterisk are relevant for children 2–4 years of age, all domains, with the exception of playing and upper body functioning, are relevant for those 5–17 years of age.

to gain a deeper understanding of the barriers to school participation, including safety, transportation, accessibility of the curriculum and affordability.

66. Since 2013, the module has undergone several rounds of cognitive testing and revision and is expected to be finalized in 2018.

Capacity-building

67. To date, implementation workshops have been held in Nadi, Fiji (Pacific Island region), Casablanca, Morocco (Western Asia), Rome (non-regional), Port of Spain (Caribbean region) and Mexico City (Latin America). A total of 54 countries have attended and participated in these workshops. Additional workshops are planned for South-East and Central Asia and Africa in 2018 with funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia. The Washington Group and UNICEF jointly sponsored workshops focusing on child disability in Tunisia, Geneva (for Europe and Central Asia), New York (for Latin America and the Caribbean), New York (for East Asia and the Pacific, South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa) and in Dakar (for West and Central Africa, the Middle East and North Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa). Two workshops were held specifically for disabled peoples' organizations. The Washington Group also continues to provide assistance and advice through webinars and phone and email as required and requested.

68. The need for a regional focus on disability statistics has become evident at the regional workshops held so far. While the best way to organize regional interests had not been developed, the Washington Group has been in discussion with countries and regional groups as to how best to address the ongoing need for capacity-building regarding disability statistics. The guidebook developed as part of the ESCWA workshop is one way to develop a regional focus. Other regions have expressed an interest in developing their own guidebooks and in having greater communication and collaboration within their regions. In the coming year, the Group will consider ways to develop stronger regional capacity.

Planned activities for 2018

69. Over the next two years, the Washington Group plans to continue activities related to capacity-building and to the development of new modules. The following activities will be undertaken by the four existing working groups: analysis and dissemination, child functioning, psychosocial functioning, and administrative data. Activities include:

- Continuing to develop guidance for the analysis and presentation of data collected using Washington Group data collection tools with a focus on more general analytic topics
- Finalizing and disseminating interviewer guidelines and manuals for implementing the child functioning module
- Continuing the development of the module on inclusive education
  - Continued analysis of cognitive test data and proposing revisions based on the test results
  - Further cognitive and field testing
  - Finalizing the module
  - Developing implementation guideline documents

- Continuing the development of the disability module for use in labour force surveys
- Continuing to work on the measurement of psychosocial functioning and develop new tools if needed
- Addressing the feasibility of collecting information on disability through administrative data systems
- Continuing regional workshops to facilitate the incorporation of the Washington Group short set of questions into censuses and surveys for use in monitoring the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Sustainable Development Goals
- Collaborating with partners on projects of mutual interest.

70. The Washington Group disseminates its work products globally through the Internet (http://www.washingtongroup-disability.com) and scientific publications.

IV. Conclusions

71. Based on the reports of the various stakeholders on their ongoing and planned activities, some at the regional and others at the international level, it is important that there is adequate coordination and collaboration so as to better serve the priorities of the different regions and countries therein. Furthermore, these activities should strongly take into account the short-term and immediate needs of countries to embark on implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while also working on a medium- and long-term strategy to strengthen statistical capacity in the countries to be able to collect fit-for-purpose statistics on disability and utilize them for their national policy needs.

V. Points for discussion

72. **The Commission may wish to:**

(a) Express its views on the achievements and approve the planned activities of the United Nations organizations, including the Statistics Division, the regional commissions and WHO, as described in the present report;

(b) Endorse the creation of a group of experts for the revision of the Guidelines and Principles for the Development of Disability Statistics;

(c) Express its views on the achievements and approve the planned activities of the Washington Group, including the regional capacity-building activities, as described in the present report;

(d) Provide guidance on how to address disaggregation of data by disability status, especially in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals;

(e) Provide guidance on the most effective coordination mechanism for the work on disability statistics at the international level, for the short and long terms.

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Report of the International Labour Organization on recent developments in work and employment statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2017/228 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on recent developments in work and employment statistics. The report describes the new framework for work statistics and measures of labour underutilization adopted by the Nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians held in Geneva in 2013, their implications for national systems of work and labour-force statistics, and significance for meeting data requirements for monitoring progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 8 ("Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all") and Goal 5 ("Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"). It also highlights the ILO programme of methodological tests, guidance development, capacity-building, technical assistance, and inter-agency coordination activities undertaken to support the wide adaptation and adoption of the new standards. Recent developments in preparation for the Twentieth International Conference, to be held in October 2018, are also presented, including the main proposals, to be considered for adoption by the Conference, on a suite of international standards for statistics on work relationships to replace the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93). The Commission is invited to express its views on the progress achieved by ILO and to provide guidance on the outlined programme of work, as set out in paragraph 65 of the present report.

* E/CN.3/2018/1.

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Report of the International Labour Organization on recent developments in work and employment statistics

I. Introduction

1. The aim of the present report is to inform the Statistical Commission on recent advances in the area of work and employment statistics, as achieved by the International Labour Organization (ILO). This report centres in particular on the major outcomes of the Nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians held in Geneva from 2 to 11 October 2013 and the activities undertaken by ILO in follow-up thereto, as well as on recent developments in preparation for the Twentieth International Conference, to be held in Geneva from 10 to 19 October 2018.

2. As reported to the Statistical Commission at its forty-fourth session in 2013 (see E/CN.3/2013/17), participants at the Nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians discussed and adopted revised statistical standards on work, employment and labour underutilization. The new standards introduced several perspectives with important implications for official work and labour-force statistics programmes around the world. Major innovations included a statistical definition of "work" covering all paid and unpaid productive activities; an activity-based framework which specifies five different forms of work; a narrower definition of employment as "work for pay or profit"; new measures of labour underutilization to complement the unemployment rate; separate definitions and headline indicators for unpaid forms of work, including own-use production work, volunteer work and unpaid trainee work; and general guidance designed to support countries in establishing a coherent system of work and labour-market statistics for meeting demands for frequent and more structural data needs.

3. These changes respond to long-standing calls for a comprehensive body of statistics on work which is able to inform a wide range of economic and social policies, including on macroeconomic development and growth, employment creation and labour-market integration, human resource development and training, gender equality, household poverty and well-being, and community development and civic engagement.

4. The timely implementation of the standards will feed the requirement for more accurate indicators under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[1] and the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted on 6 July 2017 by the General Assembly by its resolution 71/313. This indicator framework calls for better data on work, employment and labour underutilization with respect to several decent work-related indicators, particularly but not only under Goal 8 ("Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all") but also under other Goals such as Goal 5 ("Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"). Other global frameworks, such as the ILO Decent Work Indicators Framework, the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators and indicators on quality of employment, will be enhanced through the implementation of the new concepts.

5. To support the implementation of the new standards, ILO has launched several initiatives covering methodological development and testing, preparation of new

[1] General Assembly resolution 70/1.

practical tools and guidelines, and revamping of its technical support and capacity-building activities. In addition, ILO is expanding and strengthening its partnerships with interested organizations at international, regional and national levels, to raise awareness more widely on the new standards and promote a coordinated approach to their adaptation and implementation across related statistical domains, in particular economic statistics, time-use statistics, gender statistics, agricultural and rural statistics, and poverty statistics.

6. In parallel, ILO has been working on a range of related activities in the area of methodological and standards development. Most noteworthy is the review of the International Classification of Status in Employment, including an updated classification whose adoption is to be discussed at the Twentieth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, to be held in Geneva in October 2018, and the twelfth meeting of the Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics held in Geneva on 2 and 3 October 2017. To the extent possible, synergies have been sought across the different areas of development to ensure coherence among standards and guidance produced and to facilitate implementation at the national level.

7. To ensure coherence in the domain of work and labour statistics, ILO has established a work programme to support the integration of the latest standards and guidance development activities in enhanced capacity-building for statistical agencies. This has already been reflected in updated training programmes such as the annual Labour Market Statistics and Analysis Academy which was first held in 2015, and will continue to serve countries over the coming years through a sharing of the latest knowledge and products, including newly published guidance, standards and tools which will be fed into training and technical assistance activities.

8. This report is structured as follows: section II describes (a) the main changes introduced through adoption of the new resolution (I) concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization, (b) the ILO programme of methodological pilot tests; (c) practical guidance development for labour-force and related surveys; (d) capacity-building and technical assistance; and (e) established partnerships and inter-agency coordination and knowledge-sharing initiatives. Section III highlights methodological developments on priority topics to be discussed at the Twentieth International Conference, including the key topic of the review, update and adoption of the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93). Additional topics to be discussed at the Conference include the methodological refinements of proposed tier III decent work-related Sustainable Development Goal indicators, statistics on education qualification and skills mismatches, international labour migration, rural labour statistics, agricultural labour statistics, forced labour, work in the informal economy and cooperatives.

II. Work, employment and labour underutilization (Nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians)

A. Major innovations introduced by the new standards

9. The standards set out in resolution I concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization adopted by the Nineteenth International Conference in October 2013 replaced the 1982 standards and related guidelines which had played a critical role as a reference for national programmes of labour-force statistics (ILO,

2013).[2] The new standards have greatly expanded the scope of labour statistics by recognizing the need to produce statistics on different forms of work, paid and unpaid, on a regular basis and by providing a common conceptual framework for this purpose. The shift towards a more comprehensive accounting of the world of work is in line with updated statistical standards on the measurement of working time and child labour (ILO, 2008).[3]

1. Work and forms-of-work framework

10. Major features of the new standards are the inclusion of the first internationally agreed statistical definition of "work" as aligned with the general production boundary, and a framework that distinguishes different forms of work in support of the production of separate statistics on each, as needed, to inform a wide range of economic, labour-market and social policies. The forms-of-work framework classifies all productive activities as different forms of work based on the main intended destination of the production and the type of transaction. Five distinct forms of work are specified: employment work, own-use production work (including production of goods and services for own final use), volunteer work, unpaid trainee work and, in a residual category, other forms of work such as unpaid compulsory work.

11. An important principle underpinning the activity-based framework is that, while the five forms of work specified are mutually exclusive, persons may be engaged in one or several forms of work over a particular reference period. As a result, it is possible to comprehensively capture the participation, contributions and working conditions of persons in employment, in own-use production work and in volunteer work, as well as to examine their interactions. This was not possible with previous standards.

2. Employment and labour underutilization

12. Employment under the new standards is, compared with the previous standards, more narrowly defined — as "work for pay or profit". This excludes activities carried out to produce goods intended mainly for own-final use by the household or family, organization-based volunteering, some types of direct volunteering, and unpaid trainee work, which are now under the rubric of the concepts of own-use production work, volunteer work and unpaid trainee work, respectively. Employment, as more narrowly defined, continues to be the reference for classifying persons of working age by their labour-force status and for producing the body of labour-force statistics. This revision will allow for more targeted monitoring of access to employment opportunities that generate an income and will inform policies directed at employment creation. As emphasized under the Sustainable Development Goals agenda, it will also support evaluation of actual progress towards reducing the gaps in labour-market integration across groups of policy priority, for example, women and men, youth and adults, persons living in rural and in urban areas, etc.

13. The definition of unemployment remains unchanged. However, a number of revisions to its measurement were introduced, such as removal of the option to exclude the job search criterion in certain contexts and expansion of the reference period for availability. Most important, unemployment is now integrated as one of

[2] For the text of the resolution, see http://ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/meetings-and-events/international-conference-of-labour-statisticians/19/WCMS_230304/lang--en/index.htm.

[3] For the text of resolution concerning statistics on child labour, see http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/standards-and-guidelines/resolutions-adopted-by-international-conferences-of-labour-statisticians/lang--en/index.htm.

several measures of labour underutilization which also include time-related underemployment and the potential labour force. The latter is a newly defined group which captures persons not employed who express interest in the labour market but do not fully meet the criteria for classification as unemployed. This includes, for example, discouraged job seekers and others who may face a variety of personal, social or economic barriers which limit their labour-market access. For dissemination purposes, a new set of measures of labour underutilization, LU1-LU4, are provided to promote a more comprehensive monitoring of changes in labour markets than can be achieved through the unemployment rate alone, and to better capture differences between urban and rural areas, women and men, youth and adults and other groups of policy priority.

3. Unpaid forms of work

14. To support full measurement of unpaid forms of work, the standards introduced new statistical definitions, basic measurement guidance and headline indicators for own-use production work, volunteer work and unpaid trainee work.

15. Own-use production work covers all activities carried out to produce goods and provide services intended mainly for own use by the household or family. While those activities are considered part of a single form of work, the new standards enable the separate reporting of own-use production of goods and own-use provision of services to allow for their integration with economic statistics, for the preparation of national and satellite accounts, and at the same time to support gender analysis on issues such as household division of labour, time burden of unpaid work, and the contributions of women's and men's unpaid work to overall household material welfare, income and well-being. Through inclusion in the international standards, it constitutes a critical input, supporting countries in production of the statistics required to monitor Sustainable Development Goal indicator 5.4.1 ("Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location"), under Goal 5. In addition, for countries where small-scale farming is widespread, the standards provide and recommend the dissemination of the decent work indicator "rate of subsistence foodstuff producers" as a headline measure, together with other indicators of labour-market performance, for monitoring the situation of those producers and inform policymaking.

16. Guidance on volunteer work is now integrated in the international standards, following, to a large extent, the recommendations included in the ILO *Manual on Measurement of Volunteer Work* (ILO, 2011).[6] It covers all productive activities performed for others without pay and on a voluntary basis. Two kinds of volunteer work are recognized: organization-based volunteering and direct volunteering. As in the case of own-use production work, the new standards allow for the integration of statistics on volunteer work with economic statistics, for the preparation of national and satellite accounts, and at the same time to support comprehensive analysis of this form of work and of its contributions to sustainable development.

4. Implications for national work and labour-force statistics programmes

17. The implications for current labour-force statistics programmes will ultimately depend on current practices in any given country. At a basic level, the most immediate practical impact is that questionnaires, such as those for the Labour Force Survey,

[6] See http://www.ilo.org/stat/Publications/WCMS_162119/lang--en/index.htm

will need to reflect the changes in definitions outlined above. Linked to this, some impact can be expected on labour-market indicators.

18. Given the narrower definition of employment, the a priori expectation would be a lower level of employment and a lower employment-to-population ratio under the new standards. Linked to this, the level of unemployment and the unemployment rate would be expected to increase. However, the level of change required in questionnaires and the level of difference in estimates will vary across countries. In some cases, the impact will be minimal. The greatest impact in estimates would be expected for countries with high levels of own-use production of goods where the country concerned was previously classifying own-use producers of goods as employed.

19. Decisions will be required at national level on the range and frequency of statistics to be collected and published under the new standards. For example, countries may decide to run a regular Labour Force Survey with coverage limited to employment and labour underutilization. For others, particularly those with high levels of mixed agricultural activity, it will be essential to cover own-use production of goods each time that a Labour Force Survey is run. Other forms of unpaid work may be covered at a lower frequency depending on national policy interest and commitments to produce indicators, e.g., under the Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework. Many issues will need to be taken into account in framing the national system of work and labour statistics, including available resources, policy priorities and existing sources of data.

20. Implementation of the new standards in surveys, encompassing, in particular, household surveys, will need to be carefully planned and applied, and should include appropriate testing programmes. Plans should be developed in consultation with key stakeholders; and sufficient time and resources should be allocated to ensure the quality of the data generated is as desired.

21. Supporting transition to the new standards is an important part of the ILO remit and work programme. Since the Nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, ILO has engaged in a range of activities aimed at providing support to countries. Some of their more substantial elements are described below.

B. Methodological development and testing

1. ILO global programme of pilot studies

22. Given the wide-ranging changes in work and labour-force statistics introduced through the work of the Nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, in 2015, ILO launched a global programme of Labour Force Survey pilot studies through which to test alternative approaches to implementing the new standards in household surveys.[5] The ILO LFS pilot studies were implemented between 2015 and 2016 with the participation of 10 countries from four major world regions: *Africa* (Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Namibia and Tunisia); *the Americas*: (Ecuador and Peru), *Asia* (the Philippines and Viet Nam); and *Central Asia and Eastern Europe* (Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Moldova). Their successful completion was possible thanks to the high-level commitment and human resource and financial contributions of the national statistical offices of the 10 pilot countries. The African Development Bank and Data2X with the support of the United Nations Foundation further

[5] See http://www.ilo.org/stat/Areasofwork/Standards/lfs/lang--en/index.htm.

supported activities to promote knowledge-sharing among pilot countries and with partner agencies (see also below under "Partnerships").

23. The pilot studies utilized an experimental design which combined qualitative and quantitative methods in order to test and compare alternative model questionnaires covering employment, labour underutilization and own-use production work. A main objective was to evaluate how well the model questionnaires performed in different cultural and socioeconomic contexts and among women and men and persons living in urban and rural areas. Five model questionnaires were developed by ILO with the active participation of national statistical offices for testing based on a global review of existing national Labour Force Survey practice. Each pilot country tested two versions to allow comparisons both within the same context and across contexts.

24. An important methodological innovation introduced in the pilot studies was the use of cognitive interviewing to inform the questionnaire design. A cognitive testing protocol was developed by ILO with the support of the Office for National Statistics of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Technical and field staff from the 10 pilot countries were trained on cognitive interviewing methods and supported by ILO throughout the implementation process. Cognitive interviewing was used to evaluate the question-answer process and to identify potential sources of response error arising from questionnaire design. Follow-up small-scale survey field tests were conducted to evaluate internal validity and consistency across questionnaire instruments in classifying persons as, inter alia, employed, unemployed or own-use producers. Operational issues relevant for frequent large-scale survey implementation, such as average duration of the interviews, complexity of skip patterns, respondent burden and the impact of proxy respondents, were also assessed.

25. Methodological reports detailing the main findings of the ILO pilot studies will be made available through the ILO website at the end of 2017.[6] The main findings are being used to inform the preparation of evidence-based guidance to support countries' efforts to align their national practice with the new standards (see below).

26. With the completion of the ILO global pilot studies, additional methodological tests are being conducted in collaboration with interested countries and partners. Through the partnerships built during the first round of pilot studies, opportunities for greater synergies among international agencies were identified. Arising from this, a joint pilot study co-led by ILO and the World Bank Group and supported by Data 2X has been organized and is scheduled to be conducted in Sri Lanka during 2017 and 2018. The pilot study extends the evidence gathered during the earlier pilot studies by allowing more direct comparisons between the Labour Force Survey and other types of household surveys — in this case, a Living Standards Measurement Survey — through which labour is measured. The intended output from this work will be guidance on implementation of the new standards in different survey types, which can be an important support for countries that are facing decisions on collection of work and labour data through different mechanisms.

2. Related methodological and technical coordination activities

27. In addition, ILO is providing technical support to several regional initiatives aimed at testing approaches to adapting and implementing the new standards, taking into account regional priorities and specificities. In Latin America, a pilot survey project for the promotion of regional public goods was launched in 2016 under the

[6] See http://www.ilo.org/stat/Areasofwork/Standards/lfs/WCMS_484981/lang--en/index.htm

initiative of five countries of the region (Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Peru and Uruguay). The pilot studies were implemented between 2016 and 2017 with the financial support of the Inter-American Development Bank, with coordination conducted by the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) and technical backstopping by ILO. Following the methodology of the ILO global pilot programme, the Inter-American Development Bank-funded studies included cognitive interviewing and field tests. Topics covered included employment and labour underutilization, as newly defined; the boundary between employment and own-use production of goods; volunteer work; and identification of dependent contractors. An ultimate aim of the regional public goods project is to identify good practices and share recommendations with other countries of the region during the first half of 2018.

28. In Central Asia, under the leadership of the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) (CISSTAT), a project undertaken within the framework of the World Bank Trust Fund and funded by the Russian Federation, entitled "Development of labour statistics in the CIS region", tested and developed tools for measurement in some areas of work according to the new definitions, with the support of the national statistical committee of Belarus. Based on these tests, the project developed recommendations for adoption by national agencies in the region.

29. ILO also participated in several task forces established by the LAbour MArket Statistics Working Group (LAMAS) of Eurostat. Task force I, in particular, was mandated to develop input documents for the Labour Force Survey implementing act on harmonization of employment and unemployment statistics within the Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS) Framework. A core part of the work has been the development and testing of model question sequences on employment and unemployment, aligned with the new standards. ILO participation in the Eurostat task forces has been instrumental in ensuring close coordination and coherence in the methodological work and testing being led by both organizations.

30. ILO continues to participate as a member of the steering committee in the Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment under the Economic Commission for Europe, ensuring that the development of the framework and indicators is coherent with International Conference of Labour Statisticians standards, including the latest standards on work statistics.

31. To support the 2020 Round of Population and Housing Censuses, ILO participated in the expert groups set up by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the Economic Commission for Europe and contributed to the updating of the international recommendations on the topic, to be aligned with the standards adopted by the Nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

32. ILO has been working with FAO on a number of initiatives designed to support the development of rural labour statistics and measurement of decent work in rural areas. In particular, ILO has been engaged in supporting the advancement of an international definition of rural and urban areas, considered essential for international reporting of labour statistics, and in participating in the Expert Meeting on the Definition of Rural Areas organized by FAO.

33. ILO also works with FAO in supporting the improvement of agricultural labour statistics. As regards the *World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2020*,[7] ILO was the key contributor to the concepts and definitions incorporated under theme 9, entitled "Work on the holding" (vol. 1, part one, chap. 8), whereby substantial changes were introduced in order to align concepts and definitions to those adopted by the Nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians. ILO also participated in a peer review technical meeting on the FAO Agricultural Integrated Survey (AGRIS) convened for the purpose of discussing the Labour Rotating Module and field tests, and has provided additional inputs to help support FAO testing of agricultural surveys, specifically on work statistics.

34. As regards time-use statistics, ILO contributed extensively to the review and update of the International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics (ICATUS 2016), under the leadership of the Statistics Division. The new classification is fully aligned with the international standards adopted by the Nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, thus enabling its adaptation and use in time-use surveys for the production of statistics on the different forms of work, in particular own-use production work.

35. ILO participated as well in a task force organized by the Conference of European Statisticians to develop guidance on the valuation of unpaid household services. This guidance meets a demand from countries wishing to develop estimates of the value of unpaid household work. ILO contributed to ensuring the alignment of the guidance with the standards adopted by the Nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians and provided input on the measurement of time spent on those activities as one step in the valuation process. The guidance was endorsed by the Conference of European Statisticians in June 2017.[8]

36. In 2015, at its forty-sixth session, the Statistical Commission, in its decision 46/105, endorsed the establishment of an Intersecretariat Working Group on Household Surveys (see E/2015/24, chap. I, sect. C). Since late 2016, ILO has operated as the Chair of the Intersecretariat Working Group Management Group and Technical Working Group. The aim of the Intersecretariat Working Group is to promote development of coordination of the activities of international agencies having household survey programmes or playing a key role in respect of indicators delivered by household surveys. A separate report on the work of the Intersecretariat Working Group (E/CN.3/2018/7) will be submitted to the Commission at its forty-ninth session.

C. Practical guidance

37. Following the completion of the ILO global Labour Force Survey pilot survey programme, ILO embarked on the preparation of an updated suite of Labour Force Survey practical tools and guidance to be published on a progressive basis, starting in 2018, following the publication by December 2017 of the main findings derived from the ILO Labour Force Survey pilot studies. This will include, in the first quarter of 2018, the release of model Labour Force Survey questionnaires suitable for paper-and-pencil interviewing for data collection with accompanying guidelines for their national adaptation, an interviewer manual and reference materials specifying the

[7] Rome, 2017.

[8] See http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/2017/CES_6-Guide_on_Unpaid_Household_Work_for_endorsement.pdf.

indicator coverage of the model Labour Force Survey questionnaires and computation rules. The model paper-and-pencil interviewing materials for the Labour Force Survey will be accessible through the ILO website (http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/lang--en/index.htm).

38. In addition to supporting computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) data collection, a Labour Force Survey toolkit is being developed which includes modular Labour Force Survey questionnaire sequences suitable for CAPI implementation, and integrated electronic interviewer aids in English, French and Spanish, as well as automated data quality checks and data-processing procedures for the calculation of selected key indicators. The CAPI tools will be made available in CSPro for Android using a modular approach to facilitate their national adaptation. As part of the development of the CAPI Labour Force Survey toolkit, starting in the second quarter of 2018, ILO plans to collaborate with a few countries in testing its usability in preparation for wide dissemination.

39. Further, ILO will work to generate additional Labour Force Survey reference guidance in order to provide practical support to countries in their implementation of surveys designed to capture information on work and the labour force. This guidance will provide a wide range of related information on measurement (concepts, definitions and question sequences), indicator generation (definitions and instructions on derivation from question sequences) and more general support on household survey implementation (e.g., good practices in survey design and testing).

40. It is intended that, collectively, these diverse materials will serve as a comprehensive and user-friendly reference point for countries seeking to apply good practices and the latest standards in implementing their household surveys for the measurement of work and labour-force statistics. A strong emphasis will be placed on the need for good-quality national adaptation, translation and testing so as to ensure that the goal of producing high-quality data which meets both national and international data demands is achieved. Dissemination of these materials will include a special session at the Twentieth International Conference of Labour Statisticians in October 2018 devoted to raising awareness and promoting use by countries.

41. Following the release of the core volumes of the Labour Force Survey practical guidance and the CAPI toolkit, ILO will initiate plans to roll out a comprehensive programme of technical assistance and capacity-building based on the new guidance. Other agencies and donors will be invited to participate so that enhanced support can be provided to countries in achieving full implementation of the new standards at the national level.

D. Capacity-building and technical assistance

42. Following the Nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 2013, ILO capacity-building and direct technical assistance activities have been incrementally revamped to raise awareness regarding the new standards and help countries make plans for their implementation within the context of national practice. Major achievements have included the revamping of the ILO core training programme in labour-force statistics, held annually at the ILO International Training Centre, to enable establishment of the new Labour Market Statistics and Analysis Academy as from 2015; conduct of several regional training workshops, in collaboration with partners, for countries in Africa, Asia, the Americas, the Middle East, the Gulf region and the Pacific islands, as well as national training workshops and direct technical assistance to countries that are in the process of implementing the new standards.

1. Labour-Market Statistics and Analysis Academy and the Rural Development Academy

43. In 2015, ILO, in collaboration with the International Training Centre (Turin, Italy), launched the above-mentioned Labour Market Statistics and Analysis Academy to replace the labour-market information courses (LMI1 and LMI2) held annually from 2009 to 2014. The new two-week Academy introduced fully integrated course content with separate learning paths targeting the needs of labour statisticians, data analysts and senior managers. The main aim of the Academy is to enhance the capacity of ILO stakeholders (including, primarily, national statistics offices, and ministries of labour and other government agencies, as well as representatives of workers' and employers' organizations) to collect, process, disseminate, analyse and/or interpret labour-market information aligned with the latest international statistical standards and, in particular, to raise awareness on the new standards adopted by the Nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians and their implications.

44. In 2015, in Turin, close to 90 participants from all regions participated in the Academy, which was conducted in English. Gender mainstreaming in labour statistics was a central theme of the 2015 Academy, which held separate sessions for the different learning paths. A special women's scholarship fund was created to help encourage the participation of women. The 2016Academy, which was conducted in French, was held in Yamoussoukro, with the participation of 30 participants from 15 African countries. In 2017, in Turin, the Academy, which was conducted in English, had a total of 65 participants. The learning paths of the 2017 Academy concentrated on the needs of labour statisticians and data analysts in response to the new focus on supporting the production of decent work-related Sustainable Development Goal indicators. The aim was to enhance countries' understanding of the new Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework, including the linkage to the international system, as defined by the United Nations, for national and global monitoring and to expand knowledge on how decent work-related Sustainable Development Goals and targets could be monitored, taking into account existing international statistical standards. Gender considerations were mainstreamed and highlighted throughout the curriculum.

45. Also in 2017, ILO organized sessions in the Rural Development Academy related to measuring and monitoring decent work in rural areas. The Rural Development Academy targets participants from ILO member States, in particular government officials, and representatives of workers' and employers' organizations. The sessions on rural labour statistics, which were led jointly by ILO and FAO, focused on the scope and objectives of work and labour statistics in rural/urban areas (and in agriculture), as well as on decent work indicators and related Sustainable Development Goal indicators based on international statistics standards, application of a national definition of rural/urban in a household survey and simple use and interpretation of statistical information on decent work by rural/urban area and by agriculture/non-agricultural sector.

2. Regional technical assistance and capacity-building activities

46. In the period from 2014 to 2017, ILO conducted several regional training workshops covering the main elements of the new standards adopted by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians as well as other topics of high priority, including, increasingly, the Sustainable Development Goal decent work-related targets. Regional workshops were held in Bangkok (2017), Chile (2015),

China (2014), Fiji (2015), Japan (2017), New Caledonia (2014), Oman (2014), Rome (2016), South Africa (2014 and 2015), the Republic of Korea (2015), and the United Republic of Tanzania (2017).

47. In addition, direct technical assistance, including conduct of national workshops, awareness-raising with senior management, advice on planning, questionnaire design and methodological tests, and related activities, was provided to the following countries and area: *Africa*: Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia; *Asia and the Pacific islands*: Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Fiji, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Tuvalu and Viet Nam; *the Americas*: Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, the Cayman Islands, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname and Uruguay; and *the Middle East and Northern Africa*: Egypt and Tunisia.

E. Partnerships and inter-agency coordination

48. In recent years, ILO, having recognized the strong interest in statistics on work and labour, developed partnerships to support the work programme and plans to build on those partnerships to support future activities.

49. ILO is engaged in a strategic partnership with the African Development Bank, the African Union, AFRISTAT and the Economic Commission for Africa, whose goal is to support the development of labour statistics in Africa, with a particular focus on the new framework for work statistics and the decent work-related Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

50. At the global level, ILO is a member of the Women's Work and Employment partnership,[9] established in 2014 as a mechanism for supporting implementation of the latest International Conference of Labour Statisticians standards, with a particular focus on their significance for the production of gender-relevant statistics. The partnership has brought together international agencies playing a particular role in the production of statistics on labour and work, namely, ILO, the World Bank and FAO supported by Data2X. Initially, this partnership focused on providing a knowledge-sharing platform and promoting coordination of the agencies' piloting activities, which proved to be highly valuable to all of the agencies involved. The collaboration highlighted further synergies which could be achieved through more direct cooperation between the agencies. This led to the partnership's second stage, a key element of whose work programme will be the aforementioned joint pilot study in Sri Lanka.

51. With regard to the volunteer work, in November 2017, ILO and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme launched a new partnership to promote and expand its measurement through household surveys across countries. In this regard, a senior statistician position, housed at ILO in Geneva, has been established. Priority areas of work include a review of national experiences in the measurement of volunteer work through household surveys; identification of good practices and lessons learned; establishment of a pilot study programme on volunteer work measurement; further conceptual and methodological development with a view to

[9] See http://data2x.org/partnerships/womens-work-employment/.

update the existing Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work (ILO, 2011); and development of accompanying practical survey tools to support country implementation. ILO is seeking out those national statistical offices with plans to implement a survey or module on volunteer work in the period 2018–2020, to participate in the ILO-UNV volunteer work pilot study programme, with a view to supporting the development of practical survey tools for volunteer work to enable its regular inclusion as a part of official statistics.

52. In the area of time-use statistics, ILO has plans to engage in a partnership under the leadership of the Statistics Division aimed at developing and testing innovative means of collecting relevant and reliable time-use data, with a focus on the measurement of paid and unpaid forms of work, in particular to promote the development of statistics on own-use production work and to produce results that could serve as input for the development of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 5.4.1 ("Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location").

53. ILO is furthermore engaged in collaboration with the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the World Bank to promote the availability of labour data capable of meeting a diverse set of needs. The collaboration is in its early stages of development and will focus on identifying priority areas and activities for promoting the availability of key indicators on labour, with a particular focus on developing countries. While Sustainable Development Goal 8 will provide a key reference point, the collaboration seeks to both offer and advocate a broader vision of labour data needs.

III. Preparatory activities towards the Twentieth International Conference of Labour Statisticians

A. Review and update of the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93)

1. Background and reasons for the revision

54. In October 2018, the Twentieth International Conference of Labour Statisticians will review proposals for a new set of international standards for statistics on work relationships. If adopted, these standards will replace the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93). This classification, which was adopted by the Fifteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (Geneva, 19–28 January 1993) in its resolution III, is the current international standard for statistics on the topic. It provides only five substantive categories and the groups are defined with reference to the distinction between "paid employment" jobs on the one side and "self-employment" jobs on the other. Its revision was mandated at the Nineteenth International Conference in order to address a number of concerns including:

(a) The need to cover all forms of work specified in resolution I adopted by the Nineteenth International Conference concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization and to reflect the narrower definition of employment;

(b) The relevance and usefulness of the distinction between paid employment and self-employment, given the increasing number of types of employment arrangements that do not fit comfortably into either category;

(c) The boundary between self-employment and paid employment, particularly with respect to working proprietors of incorporated enterprises and dependent workers who have contractual arrangements of a commercial nature;

(d) Applicability of the standards to informal employment situations, especially the situation of informal employees;

(e) The need for greater detail to allow the identification of workers in various non-standard forms of employment, such as casual, short-term, temporary and seasonal employees, and workers on zero-hour contracts;

(f) The need for guidelines on data collection, questionnaire design, and derivation and adaptation of the standards for national use.

2. Consultation and development of proposals

55. To assist in the development of proposals to replace ICSE-93, ILO established a working group comprising producers and users of labour and economic statistics from national government agencies in all regions, intergovernmental agencies, and workers' and employers' organizations. This group met four times in the period from May 2015 to September 2017. To widen the consultation process and obtain feedback on the proposals developed by the working group, ILO also conducted a series of preparatory regional meetings of labour statisticians in all regions from late 2016 through 2017. These meetings focused on both relevance to the regional context and technical feasibility of the proposed new standards. Opportunities for testing the proposals were identified in several countries. In advance of the Twentieth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, the draft standards will be reviewed by a tripartite meeting of experts in the field of labour statistics in February 2018.[10]

3. Overview of the proposed new standards

56. The proposals are integrated under a conceptual framework which defines the key concepts, variables and classification schemes included in the new standards for statistics on work relationships. The central element is a revised International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-18) which comprises 10 relatively detailed categories. These categories may be aggregated according to two alternative classification structures. The first structure, based on the *type of authority* that the worker exercises over the economic unit for which he or she works, provides categories at its top level for "dependent" and "independent workers". The second structure, based on the *type of economic risk* to which the worker is exposed, creates a dichotomy between "workers in employment for pay" and "workers in employment for profit". This is similar to the traditional distinction between self-employment and paid employment.

57. The 10 categories in the proposed International Classification provide more detail than those in ICSE-93. They include four subcategories of employees which allow identification of those with non-standard employment arrangements, separate categories for owner-operators of corporations and a separate category for *dependent contractors*. The distinctions made in ICSE-93 between employers, own-account workers, contributing family workers and employees have been retained. A separate category for workers in producers' cooperatives, however, has not been retained.

[10] The report discussed at the Meeting of Experts, the draft resolution and the record of the meeting will be made available to the Statistical Commission as room documents.

58. The development of proposals for the new category of dependent contractors has been particularly challenging. They are currently defined as "workers employed for profit, usually by way of a commercial transaction, who are dependent on another entity that directly benefits from the work performed by them and exercises explicit or implicit control over their activities". They may either provide labour to others while having contractual arrangements similar to those under self-employment or they may own and operate a business without employees but do not have full control or authority over their work. Testing currently under way in several countries is focusing heavily on the development of methods for identifying the group of dependent contractors in statistical collections.

59. The proposed international standard classification of status at work is an extension of the classification of status in employment to cover all forms of work, including own-use production work, volunteer work and unpaid trainee work, as well as employment. The purpose of the classification of status at work is to allow the production of conceptually consistent statistics on different populations and from different sources, rather than to enable, in its entirety, the compilation of statistics from any particular survey. The categories in the classification of status at work are defined in such a way as to allow the provision of separate statistics on activities within and beyond the System of National Accounts production boundary.

60. The classifications according to status are complemented by a set of cross-cutting variables and categories which provide more detailed information on the degree of stability and permanence of the work. They include definitions and categories for types of arrangement that cut across several status categories. The bulk of these variables are regularly included in most labour-force surveys but are not covered by internationally agreed statistical standards. The proposals therefore seek not only to provide more relevant and detailed statistics on status in employment but also to promote greater harmonization, coherence and international comparability of statistics on various aspects of the contractual and other conditions in which work is performed.

B. Work in the informal economy

61. Resolution II concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector was adopted by the Fifteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1993). The guidelines concerning a statistical definition of informal employment were endorsed at the Seventeenth International Conference, held from 24 November to 3 December 2003. Through the adoption of resolution I concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization by the Nineteenth International Conference, the boundaries of labour-market statistics have fundamentally changed, impacting on the statistical definitions of informal sector and informal employment. It is also likely that the expected revision of ICSE-93 will have an impact on the statistical definition of informal employment. These changes, along with the need to refine this important factor as an accepted Sustainable Development Goal indicator, have created a strong need to align the definitions of informal sector and informal employment to the latest developments. The need for alignment was also one of the main conclusions during the twelfth meeting of the Expert Group on Informal Sector Statistics (the Delhi Group), held in Geneva on 2 and 3 October 2017.

62. ILO will submit a discussion paper to the Twentieth International Conference of Labour Statisticians I summarizing the known problems associated with the resolution adopted by the Fifteenth Conference and the guidelines endorsed by the

Seventeenth Conference. ILO will also identify ways in which the statistical framework of informal sector and informal employment could be developed and modified in order to align the framework to the concept of work as defined in the resolution adopted at the Nineteenth Conference and the likely revision of ICSE-93. The paper will solicit guidance on the proposed options and on how best to ensure progress in the work required.

C. Rural labour statistics and agricultural labour statistics

63. ILO and FAO have begun preparing a room paper which will be presented at the Twentieth International Conference. The paper will be divided into two parts, with the first focusing on rural labour statistics and the second on agricultural labour statistics. The topic is very timely, as a key guiding principle of the Sustainable Development Goal monitoring framework is to ensure that nobody is left behind, which includes ensuring adequate geographical area (rural/urban) and industry breakdowns of the indicators that are useful to policymakers. The topic of "rural" in labour statistics reflects a breakdown of the national territory into distinct, mutually exclusive subnational areas according to the set of definitional criteria applied (for urban/rural) and to which jobs, work activities and households can be assigned. On the other hand, agricultural labour statistics refer to a classification by agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, allowing jobs and work activities (including subsistence food production work) to be coded by agricultural or non-agricultural sector.

64. The two topics, while related based on traditional geographical location of agriculture, are quite distinct from each other both conceptually and in terms of measurement. Production both of rural/urban breakdowns and of agricultural/non-agricultural sector breakdowns of labour statistics presents unique challenges for measurement in household surveys. The discussion paper will seek to address these issues and propose initial options for guidelines based on best practices in sampling design and questionnaire design in countries as well as Labour Force Survey pilot test results, while soliciting guidance from the Twentieth International Conference.

IV. Points for discussion

65. **The Statistical Commission is invited to:**

(a) **Express its support for the wide implementation of the new standards adopted by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians at national and international levels with a view to improving the relevance of work and labour-market statistics so as to enable close monitoring of the decent work-related Sustainable Development Goal targets under various Goals, particularly 5 and 8;**

(b) **Note the progress made by the International Labour Organization (ILO), in its collaboration with interested national statistical offices, international agencies and other development partners, in developing evidence-based methodologies, practical guidance and survey tools through which to support the implementation of the new framework for work statistics and measures of labour underutilization;**

(c) **Encourage expressions of interest from national statistical offices and international agencies in collaborating with ILO in further methodological testing, with a view to developing updated practical guidance on the**

measurement of activities such as volunteer work and own-use production work, selected issues associated with the employment relationship such as the identification of dependent contractors, measurement of education qualifications and skills mismatches;

(d) Support the rollout of a comprehensive ILO programme of technical assistance and capacity-building on work and labour-force statistics and encourage development partners and international agencies to contribute to this effort through collaboration and coordinated implementation across relevant statistical sources;

(e) Note the methodological work and wide-ranging consultation process at regional and international levels undertaken by ILO in preparation for the forthcoming Twentieth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, to be held in Geneva in October 2018;

(f) Express its views on the proposed revisions aimed at updating the International Classification of Status in Employment and encourage the active participation of labour statisticians from national statistical offices and ministries of labour as well as international agencies in the Twentieth International Conference of Labour Statisticians in October 2018;

(g) Support the proposal to undertake a review of existing guidelines and standards relating to statistics on the informal sector and informal employment in close coordination with the Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics.

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Items for discussion and decision: ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data

Report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2017/228 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data. As the proportion of the world's population in the older ages continues to increase, the need for improved information and analysis of population ageing becomes pressing. Furthermore, implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the pledge to leave no one behind require timely and reliable data across all ages. The report provides an overview of challenges with respect to data on older populations and includes a proposal to form a new city group, the Titchfield group on ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data, to address issues of conceptualization, methodology and instruments in the domains of ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data. The Titchfield Group would contribute to and build upon international standards and methods for the compilation of ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data, by reviewing and extending existing advances and by enlisting expertise from various countries as well as the international, academic and non-profit sectors concerned with ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data. Harnessing private sector expertise in relation to innovative approaches, including big data, in the use and presentation of ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data will also be important. The Statistical Commission is invited to express its views on the proposal to establish the group on ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data and its proposed terms of reference.

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Report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data

I. Introduction

1. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[1] which includes a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals, sets out a universal plan of action to achieve sustainable development in its social, economic and environmental dimensions in an integrated manner. It seeks to realize the human rights of all people at all ages. It pledges to leave no one behind and "to reach the furthest behind first". This demands addressing the specific rights and needs of all people, including overlooked population groups such as older women and men, and vulnerable subgroups of the older population.

2. As the proportion of the world's population in the older ages continues to increase, the need for improved information and analysis of population ageing becomes pressing. To achieve effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and fulfil the pledge to leave no one behind, data are required across all ages and across the full range of sustainable development targets. Preparing for an ageing population is integral to the achievement of the integrated 2030 Agenda, with a particular emphasis on Sustainable Development Goals related to poverty eradication, good health, gender equality, decent work, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities and peaceful and inclusive societies. Population ageing, which is a major global trend that affects all regions, reflects one of the major achievements of human development, resulting in part from better living conditions, improved health, greater longevity and lower mortality (Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, 2007; United Nations, 2017).

3. It is widely recognized that the contribution and participation of all people is essential for sustainable development. This is as true for older persons as it is for members of other age groups. Many older women and men are already making significant contributions in all aspects of life, including in formal and informal employment, and at the family and community level through unpaid work and through their participation in decision-making processes. Others are unable to contribute or face significant barriers to enjoying their right to participate, including ageist attitudes which restrict older people's autonomy and their ability to participate in different areas of individual, family and community life. Improvements in statistical systems will provide a more nuanced understanding of diverse forms of participation and older people's current and potential contribution to their families, communities and societies.

4. The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing[2] and the Political Declaration,[3] adopted by the international community at the Second World Assembly on Ageing in April 2002, recognize for the first time in history that "ageing has profound consequences for every aspect of individual, community, national and international life". The Madrid Plan of Action in particular stresses the importance of research, data collection and analysis in supporting policy and programme development as a key priority for national Governments and international assistance. Section III of the Plan of Action on implementation and follow-up draws attention to the need to advance research, particularly in developing countries, on age- and

[1] General Assembly resolution 70/1.

[2] *Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8-12 April 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[3] Ibid., annex I.

gender-sensitive data collection and analysis in order to provide essential evidence for effective policies. Following the adoption of the Plan of Action, the General Assembly, at successive sessions, has called for the international community and the United Nations system to "support national efforts to provide funding for research and data-collection initiatives on ageing" (see, e.g., Assembly resolution 69/146, para. 38).

5. In its resolution WHA69.3, in which the Sixty-ninth World Health Assembly adopted the global strategy and action plan on ageing and health, the Assembly specifically requested the Director-General "to provide technical support to Member States to strengthen systems to collect, analyse, use and interpret data on healthy ageing over time" (para. 4 (1)) and "to support research and innovation to foster healthy ageing" (para. 4 (8)). Enhanced measurement, monitoring and research for healthy ageing is strongly called for in strategic objective 5 of the Strategy.

6. Further, in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[4] adopted by the Conference in Cairo on 13 September 1994, and its related review processes, there is a call for the United Nations system to address existing data gaps, including those related to population ageing and the situation of older persons, as well as to support countries upon request in addressing population ageing at the national level.

7. The facts speak for themselves: According to the latest population estimates and projections (Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, 2017), there are currently 962 million people aged 60 or over, comprising 13 per cent of the global population. While Asia has the world's largest number of people aged 60 or over (549 million), Europe has the largest proportion of its population in this age group (25 per cent). Population ageing is known to arise from two demographic effects: increasing longevity and declining fertility. As public-health gains advance in most countries, global life expectancy will continue to increase, contributing to a rise in the number of older persons. In countries with low or falling fertility rates, the proportion of older persons will also grow rapidly. The number of people aged 60 or over is projected to reach 1.4 billion in 2030, constituting over 16 per cent of the global population. By 2030, older persons are expected to account for 30 per cent of the population in Europe, 26 per cent in Northern America, 20 per cent in Oceania, 17 per cent in Asia and in Latin America and the Caribbean and 6 per cent in Africa.

8. While the international community has acknowledged these global demographic shifts, little has been done to facilitate a recognition of the fact that older women and men belong to as diverse an age group as any other. They should not, therefore, be lumped together as members of the 60+ age group, assuming uniformity across age and gender and other socioeconomic and demographic characteristics. To better understand the challenges and opportunities confronted by older persons and to assess their economic, social, health and cultural conditions, systematic data analysis, data disaggregation and data-collection approaches and methodologies need to be developed to fill these data and evidence gaps, building on work already completed, including for example, the Recommendations on Ageing-related Statistics (September 2016), prepared by the Task Force on Ageing-related Statistics of the Economic Commission for Europe. It is also critical to improve the understanding of the gender and urban/rural dimensions of the lives of older persons, since social, economic, health and cultural factors affect older women and men in different ways.

9. Coordinated action is needed by national statistical offices in addressing these evidence gaps, and to ensure that age-disaggregated data is available across a range

[4] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

of domains. It important that this be carried out within a conceptual framework that aligns the policy and analytical context so as to ensure that data and analysis are directed towards addressing the policy challenges associated with an ageing population. Without this action, there is a risk that the diversity of experiences of older persons will be overlooked, that particular subgroups of older persons will be invisible in the data and that there will be a disconnect between availability of data, and the ability to conduct meaningful analysis in support of evidence-based policy formulation and decision-making.

II. Challenges for ageing and age-disaggregated data

10. A large number of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators refer to age disaggregation or address age-specific concerns; however, much of the survey data currently available — particularly, but not exclusively, in developing countries — excludes various age groups. Where such data exist, lack of harmonization of age disaggregation together with small sample sizes at older ages means that data are not comparable or adequate for monitoring the Goals. Additionally, a lack of age standardization can be the source of a misleading perspective. In developed countries, a notable challenge is the paucity of data on older people living in institutions. These kinds of issues make it difficult to track the impact of development programmes on the full life cycle. A further challenge is to adequately capture data on the contributions (both economic and non-economic) of older persons, which are often hidden. Age disaggregation, and disaggregation in intersections of age, sex, disability, location and other characteristics, are critical for developing programmes that will help people break free of intergenerational poverty. Without better ageing-related data, the risk increases of compounding inequalities and locking the most vulnerable and marginalized out of development.

11. The related statistical challenges encompass the following:

- Knowledge and availability of data
- Lack of knowledge of existing data on older persons: for example, existing data on older people may be collected, but may not be analysed or published, or made openly accessible, particularly in cases where they are held across a range of agencies
- Currently, much of the available survey data exclude various age groups; and available data are not disaggregated by age in higher age groups, of if they are, this is not done consistently
- Lack of consistent data across all ages relating to specific topics of interest in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals indicators
- Data reporting in the area of intersections of age, gender, disability, location and other relevant dimensions of inequality is insufficient, particularly for older ages
- Progress in the area of gender and disability statistics in recent years has not resulted in greater availability of data on ageing. Data are not collected in a standardized and systematic way on key topics such as economic independence, violence, abuse and neglect of older people, dementia, prevalence of HIV/AIDS and caregiving. This is particularly true for developing countries but is true as well for many developed countries and countries in transition
- Lack of consistent and comparable survey data

- Many household surveys do not cover older age groups, such as Demographic and Health Surveys and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys which include only individuals up to age 49 (women) and age 52 (men), as the survey mandate is for a specific younger subgroup of the population. In other surveys, such as Labour Force Surveys, the disaggregation of indicators in a number of countries is capped at age 65 or over

- The surveys conducted under the World Bank Living Standards Measurement Study are potentially rich data sources, as they collect data on health, demographics and economic activities of older people. However, those surveys are not utilized to their full potential for the analysis of living standards of older populations. The questionnaires used under the Living Standards Measurement Study are also less standardized than Demographic and Health Survey questionnaires, which makes international comparisons more challenging

- Standards and methodologies for collecting the missing information directly from older persons through household survey instruments do not exist, for example, with respect to consistency among available age groups across sources both within and across countries

- There are a number of specialized ageing surveys and longitudinal studies on ageing administered in different countries, for example, Mexico's Health and Ageing Study, Brazil's Longitudinal Study of Health Ageing and Well-Being, China's Health, Ageing and Retirement Longitudinal Survey, India's Longitudinal Ageing Study and Indonesia's Family Life Survey. These are important sources of the information needed to understand ageing processes and the life course. More countries should be encouraged to develop and administer these specialized types of studies and should be provided with support in this regard

- Older people living outside of traditional households (e.g., the institutionalized and the homeless) are rarely captured by data systems, with censuses often the only source of information on these groups

- Availability, coverage and utilization of administrative and civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) data are limited in many countries

- The routine health information derived from health systems such as health centres and hospitals are poorly utilized and not well integrated in the national statistics system, in spite of the potential breadth and depth of that information with regard to the health of older persons

- The coverage of death registration, including information on causes of death, while robust in some countries, is not universal

- There may be coverage and definitional issues associated with administrative data; for example, coverage of older people living outside of traditional households may be limited

- Challenges associated with combining multiple sources of data

- Legal and administrative challenges to accessing different sources of data (e.g., administrative data, big data and private sector data)

- Technical difficulties, including lack of unique identifiers, which are confronted in attempts to combine different sources.

12. These challenges signify that while the Sustainable Development Goals do refer to older people and call for disaggregation of data by age, sex, disability and other relevant indicators of inequality, there is a risk that if we rely on current data, we may reach 2030 and still not fully understand the lives lived by older people, for example,

how many older people are in poverty, how many older men and women are victims of elder abuse, how many care for others and how many are in work. A concerted effort by national statistical offices and the international community is required for the development and sharing of the tools needed to support the collection, analysis and reporting of data on ageing.

13. The availability of data and statistics on older persons will allow countries to more accurately monitor the situation of older persons during the implementation phase of the 2030 Agenda and other global and regional action plans. This empirical evidence will also support Governments as well as bilateral and multilateral development partners in identifying key strategic interventions and development support programmes and related activities. States have an obligation to uphold human rights to non-discrimination and equality. Production of disaggregated data (e.g., by age, sex, disability and location) constitutes part of the commitment to human rights.

III. Proposal

14. To address these challenges in a more formal and systematic way, a broad range of interested stakeholders have come together to mobilize, partner and coordinate efforts towards standardizing approaches to improving the availability of ageing-related statistics and age disaggregation of data.

15. In May 2016, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) hosted a high-profile international conference bringing together partners from civil society, Governments and multilateral organizations, which resulted in the development of the DFID Data Disaggregation Action Plan: Better Data for Better Lives.[7] The DFID Action Plan aims at harnessing the strong support from partner Governments, civil society and multilateral organizations in the international development community to expand the existing statistical architecture for data disaggregation. Achieving full disaggregation across all social groups, as outlined in the global Sustainable Development Goals, will be a complex and long-term undertaking. One key recommendation outlined in the plan entails formalizing the shared momentum generated by the May 2016 conference through the establishment of a city group (which would submit reports to the Statistical Commission) on age disaggregation and ageing-related data, whose aim would be to document, share and, where necessary, develop tools, methods and standards designed to support age disaggregation and ageing-related data.

16. On the margins of the United Nations World Data Forum in January 2017, a group of stakeholders encompassing representatives of national statistical offices convened at an offsite meeting where, acknowledging the importance of the issues of ageing in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, they agreed on the need for a formal mechanism connecting countries through which they could learn from each other and collaborate on standardized approaches to disaggregating data on the dimensions of ageing and filling ageing-related data gaps.

17. At the forty-eighth session of the Statistical Commission, in March 2017, the Office for National Statistics of the United Kingdom presented a proposal for the establishment of the Titchfield city group on ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data, for adoption at the forty-ninth session of the Commission.

18. A side event, convened in the framework of the forty-eighth session of the Statistical Commission and led by the Office for National Statistics, was attended by about 50 participants, including representatives of 19 national statistical offices, who

[7] See https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/582315/Data-disaggregation-action-plan-Jan-2017.pdf

had showed strong interest in the establishment of the proposed city group. The side event was informed by the establishment of draft terms of reference for the proposed city group, as prepared by an informal group of stakeholders[6] in consultation with interested national statistical offices. Participants discussed potential focus areas for the proposed city group and called for it to contribute to the work of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, particularly in the area of data disaggregation and interlinkages, and to help develop an understanding of the impact of demographic trends on the attainment of the Goals. They noted the important contributions of civil society, academia and other stakeholders.

19. A technical seminar on the proposed city group, held in Winchester, United Kingdom, from 22 to 24 August 2017, was attended by more than 50 representatives of national statistical offices,[7] the United Nations system, other international organizations, civil society organizations and academia. Participants at the meeting shared knowledge and experience related to the core issues of age-disaggregated data and ageing-related statistics, and sought to advance consensus on the objectives, organization, activities, expected deliverables and timeline for the proposed city group.

20. Ahead of the technical workshop, invitations were extended to many national statistical offices, including those that had shown interest and/or attended the side events at the World Data Forum in January 2017 and the forty-eighth session of the Statistical Commission in March 2017. Following the workshop, the informal group reached out to all interested national statistical offices. As a result, a number of additional national statistical offices joined the group and became involved in the development of the present report.

21. The proposed city group should ensure that any proposed development of statistics related to ageing or age-disaggregation is relevant to those policy priorities to which greater data availability and improved statistics can make a core contribution. Following the extensive consultations of national statistical offices and other interested stakeholders, the following policy-focused statistical priorities and challenges were identified as relevant:

- Data to enable sustainable development strategies that empower older persons
- Statistics that capture linkages between multiple dimensions of the lives of older persons as consistent with their needs, preferences and rights
- Data that reflect the diversity and inequality among older persons and the contexts in which they live
- Communication of the challenges and opportunities associated with ageing as reflected in the information available to key stakeholders and society
- Information that helps demonstrate the participation and engagement of older persons in the economy and society and sustainable development for all.

22. In order to address these priorities, there is a need to develop a conceptual framework for ageing-related statistics which can help inform policy formulation and decision-making. There is also a need to extend the data available on the situation and

[6] This informal support group has been established based on the initiative of the Department for International Development (DFID), Statistics UK and HelpAge International and is supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat.

[7] The national statistical offices of Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Colombia, China, Denmark, Hungary, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

experiences of older persons, to disaggregate data by age to allow effective analysis of the life course and to make data about older persons available to support analysis of the diversity of their experience and ensure that subgroups do not become invisible.

23. The new Titchfield city group on ageing-related statistics (Titchfield Group), will address issues of conceptualization, methodology and instruments in the domains of ageing and age-disaggregated statistics. The Titchfield Group would contribute to and build upon international standards and methods for the compilation of ageing and age-disaggregated statistics, by reviewing and extending existing advances and by enlisting expertise from various countries as well as the international, academic and non-profit sectors concerned with ageing-related data. Harnessing expertise in relation to innovative approaches in the use and presentation of data, including big data, will also be important. The Statistical Commission agreed at its forty-fifth session to create the Global Working Group on Big Data for Official Statistics to enable the further investigation of the benefits and challenges of big data, including the potential for monitoring and reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals. It will be important to ensure that the Global Working Group includes the issue of ageing in its agenda. There are also private sector organizations that specialize in the use and analysis of big data to support the work of government and civil society whose expertise can be drawn upon.

24. The Titchfield Group would explore data and statistics within the critical domains where they relate to ageing and age disaggregation. These could include economic empowerment and income security, literacy and lifelong education, health and long-term care, violence, gender equality, social inclusion, participation and living arrangements for older persons. Coverage will be agreed when the group is formed, taking into account the recommendations of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002), and more recent strategies endorsed by Member States, such as the Economic Commission for Europe Recommendations on Ageing-related Statistics, 2016 and the WHO global strategy and action plan on ageing and health 2016–2020, as well as the requirements of the 2030 Agenda.

25. Additionally, given the broad remit of the Statistical Commission and its city groups, the Titchfield Group would collaborate with the United Nations and other organizations concerned with specific aspects of ageing-related statistics, such as health, disability, governance, human rights and gender. The Titchfield Group will also aim to link up with the important work associated with the 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme.

IV. Objectives

26. The overall objective of the proposed Titchfield Group is to develop standardized tools and methods for producing both data disaggregated by age and ageing-related data, and to encourage countries to do so, by playing a leading role in the development and communication of new standards and methodologies. Existing issues and deficits in data on ageing will be addressed. More specifically, the Group will aim towards:

- Producing and facilitating assessments at global, regional and national levels of the most important ageing policy imperatives and their statistical requirements, including existing and new data sources and the statistical measurement gaps
- Promoting a common understanding of the core concept of ageing through development of a conceptual framework for ageing-related statistics

- Producing guidelines and case studies on age-related statistics, harmonized standards, and standardized methods for collection, processing and analysis of ageing-related data
- Identifying and promoting good practice for sharing, quality assessment and use of administrative and civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) data related to ageing
- Contributing to the review and analysis of the implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals from the perspective of age-related measures within the framework and time frame set by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators.

27. Ultimately, through greater availability and knowledge of ageing-related data and statistics, the Titchfield Group will seek to contribute to the following development outcomes:

- Improved and harmonized statistical measurement and dissemination of information on the life course, enabling evidence-based policymaking in relation to ageing
- Greater awareness among policymakers and development practitioners of the importance of the ageing agenda, and the pledge in the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind and to reach the furthest behind first
- Greater availability of tools and guidelines to increase capacity and facilitate understanding and action on ageing issues.

V. Activities

28. In order to meet the objectives set out above, the Titchfield Group will focus its efforts on the documentation of good practice and the development of standardized recommendations and approaches to supporting age-disaggregation across the life course and producing ageing-related statistics for national statistical offices. This will cover the conceptualization, measurement methodology and dissemination of ageing-related data. In the course of its efforts, the Titchfield Group will draw on the various manuals and guidelines addressing specific aspects of the statistical monitoring of age and ageing developed by various stakeholders, including members of the Group.

29. Should the proposal for a Titchfield Group be adopted, a formal workplan will be developed and a proposal thereon will be put forth at the fiftieth session of the Statistical Commission in 2019. It is anticipated that the workplan would include the following activities:

- Development of a conceptual and analytical framework for ageing-related statistics through a life course approach (including a "think piece" on autonomy, participation and contribution of older people)
- Development of a mechanism/tool for baseline assessment/inventory and country pilots, covering existing and new data sources, capacity assessment of producers and users, policy imperatives, statistical requirements, statistical measurement gaps and identification of stakeholders (users) of ageing-related data
- Identification of situations where age caps exist and advocate, where possible, for their removal, including cost benefit analysis of removing age caps
- Development of a platform for sharing information

- Preparing and promoting with national statistical offices a set of guidelines, covering good practice case studies, guidelines in different settings, methodology for measuring the life course (sampling and non-sampling errors), model questions, editing and imputation techniques, production of prospective statistics on ageing, linking data sets, small-area estimation, awareness of legislative and policy frameworks, accessibility of data, analysis (particularly through a life course approach), dissemination of good practice compendiums, qualitative techniques for enhancing quantitative analysis, and harmonization of standards and definitions related to age

- Sustainable Development Goal framework assessment, contributing to the work of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators on data disaggregation and ageing-related Sustainable Development Goal indicators

- Horizon scanning, including working with data users to identify trends in society and upcoming issues that will impact on ageing-related statistics.

30. The workplan would set out a timetable for these activities so that the benefits can be realized throughout the life of the Titchfield Group.

VI. Method of operations

31. The Chair of the Titchfield Group will be assumed by the United Kingdom Office for National Statistics. Secretariat services for the Group will be provided by the Office, including the development of a communications strategy and a resource mobilization strategy. A steering committee, incorporating the Office for National Statistics, other national statistical offices that are members of the Titchfield Group, and representatives of multilateral organizations, civil society and academia, will provide strategic direction. The steering committee will operate in a spirit of equal partnership among the members and will remain open so as to welcome additional members from other national statistical offices.

32. The Titchfield Group will carry out its work through holding face-to-face meetings, with technical sessions (once a year); through task team meetings and electronic discussion forums on specific themes, with designated membership from national statistical offices and other participants in the Group, including civil society; through commissioned documents; and through representation and information-sharing at age and ageing-related conferences and proceedings. National statistical offices may assist the Chair by taking leadership roles in task teams set up to address specific issues and deliverables.

33. It is proposed that the first meeting of the Titchfield Group be held in the first half of 2018. It is also proposed that the Group operate for a five-year period, from 2018 to 2023, after which time a review would be carried out to assess whether the Group was still needed.

34. The group will report to the Statistical Commission at its sessions in 2019, 2021 and 2023. It is anticipated that deliverables will be staggered throughout the lifetime of the Titchfield Group.

35. This model aims to build on the successful practices employed by existing city groups.

VII. Points for discussion

36. **The Commission is invited to express its views regarding the proposal to establish a Titchfield Group on ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data and its proposed terms of reference (see annex).**

Annex

Proposed terms of reference for the Titchfield Group on ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data

A1. The proposed Titchfield Group on ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data (the Titchfield Group), to be formally established by the Statistical Commission at its forty-ninth session, in March 2018, has as its aim to contribute to establishing international standards and methods for the compilation of statistics and data on the major dimensions of ageing and age-disaggregated data across the life cycle, and to collaborate with United Nations bodies and other organizations concerned with specific aspects of ageing and age statistics.

A2. The overall objective of the proposed Titchfield Group is to develop standardized tools and methods for producing both data disaggregated by age and ageing-related data, and encourage countries to do so, by playing a leading role in the development and communication of new standards and methodologies. Existing issues and deficits in data on ageing will be address thereby.

A3. The specific objectives of the Titchfield Group are:

- To produce and facilitate assessments at global, regional and national levels of the most important existing policy imperatives and statistical requirements and new data sources and statistical measurement gaps
- To promote a common understanding of the core concept of ageing through development of a conceptual framework for ageing-related statistics
- To produce guidelines and case studies on age-related statistics, harmonized standards and standardized methods for collection, processing and analysis of ageing-related data
- To identify and promote good practice for sharing, quality assessment and use of administrative and civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) data related to ageing
- To contribute to the review and analysis of the implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals from the perspective of age-related measures within the framework and time frame set by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators.

A4. The Titchfield Group will develop documentation/a handbook covering data on ageing-related and age- disaggregated data for national statistical offices which will cover the conceptualization, measurement methodology such as compilation of ageing-related data by different means of disaggregation, analytical methods and dissemination of data related to ageing. To that end, the Titchfield Group will carry out:

- Development of a conceptual and analytical framework for ageing-related statistics through a life course approach (including a think piece on autonomy, participation and contribution of older people)
- Development of a mechanism/tool for baseline assessment/inventory and country pilots, covering existing and new data sources, capacity assessment of producers and users, policy imperatives, statistical requirements, statistical measurement gaps, and identification of stakeholders (users) of ageing-related data
- Identification of situations where age caps exist and advocate, where possible, for their removal, including cost benefit analysis of removing age caps
- Development of a platform for sharing information

- Preparing, and promoting with national statistical offices, a set of guidelines covering good practice case studies, guidelines in different settings, methodology for measuring the life course (sampling and non-sampling errors), model questions, editing and imputation techniques, production of prospective statistics on ageing, linking data sets, small-area estimation, awareness of legislative and policy frameworks, accessibility of data, analysis (particularly through a life course approach), dissemination of good practice compendiums, qualitative techniques for enhancing quantitative analysis, and harmonization of standards and definitions related to age

- Sustainable Development Goals framework assessment, contributing to the work of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators on data disaggregation and ageing-related Sustainable Development Goal Indicators

- Horizon scanning, including working with data users to identify trends in society and upcoming issues that will exert an impact on ageing-related statistics.

A5. The Chair of the Titchfield Group will be assumed by the United Kingdom Office for National Statistics. The Office for National Statistics will serve as secretariat of the group. Its activities will include the development of a communications strategy and a resource mobilization strategy. A steering committee — incorporating the Office for National Statistics, other national statistical offices that are members of the Titchfield Group, representatives of multilateral organizations (the United Nations and perhaps entities other than the United Nations), civil society and academia — will provide strategic direction. The steering committee will operate in a spirit of equal partnership among the members and will remain open so as to welcome additional members from other national statistical offices.

A6. The Titchfield group will carry out its work through:

- Face-to-face meetings with technical sessions (at least once a year) to be hosted by national statistical offices

- Task team meetings and electronic discussion forums on specific themes, with designated group members

- Commissioned documents

- Representation and information-sharing at age-related conferences and proceedings, and at open meetings during sessions of the Statistical Commission and other global or regional gatherings

- The Office for National Statistics in support of the Vice-Chairs will provide substantive and technical leadership towards the formal establishment of the Titchfield Group. The Office, in partnership with the secretariat and the steering committee, will engage in the development of a resource mobilization strategy to secure the financial support needed. Other specialized agencies of the United Nations system as well as outside experts will be invited to provide support in their areas of expertise, where relevant

- Upon the formal establishment of the Titchfield Group, it is proposed that its first meeting be held in Titchfield, United Kingdom, during the first half of 2018. The Group will initially operate for a five-year period, from 2018 to 2023, after which time a review of its substantive work as well as its methods of work will be carried out

- The Titchfield Group will report to the Statistical Commission at its sessions in 2019, 2021 and 2023.

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Items for discussion and decision: working methods of the Statistical Commission

Report of the Bureau on the working methods of the Statistical Commission: review of the city group mechanism

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2017/228 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Bureau on the review of the Commission's working methods, with a focus on the city group mechanism. The report revisits the origins of the city group mechanism and its main characteristics and explores the extent to which its goals have been met.

Points for discussion by the Commission are contained in paragraph 17.

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Report of the Bureau on the working methods of the Statistical Commission: review of the city group mechanism

I. Introduction

1. City groups were formally established by the Statistical Commission in the mid-1990s, inter alia to complement existing processes for the development and adoption of international statistical standards by adapting more nimbly to changing conditions. Over the past 20 years, the Commission has established 16 city groups, 9 of which are still operating and 7 of which have completed their work.

2. These city groups have examined a number of topics of methodological interest, developed handbooks, manuals and compendiums of best practices, developed and tested questionnaires and provided training and workshops. The results have been impressive — including contributions in the area of price statistics, the System of National Accounts, energy and environmental statistics and measurement issues of the informal sector. The majority of city group outputs were endorsed by the Statistical Commission and there seems to be consensus that the city group mechanism has generally been successful.

3. The current report examines the history of the city group mechanism and its unique role in the Statistical Commission and the global statistical system. The report is based on a consultancy report commissioned by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat[1] and is intended to initiate and facilitate a discussion on the current working methods of the Commission, in particular the role of city groups vis-à-vis other groups[2] operating under the auspices of the Commission.

II. The genesis and operation of city groups: background

4. The global statistical system is characterized by voluntary cooperation between Member States in the development of methodological aspects of statistics and in the adoption of international standards and the relevant implementation manuals. Inclusiveness and collective ownership are of critical importance in developing standards to ensure that the requirements of all countries, not just those from more developed national statistical offices, are considered when a new standard is being developed. To ensure that these characteristics in developing statistical standards and methodologies are accomplished, the United Nations has instituted a system of representation and nomenclature to increase inclusiveness which includes, for example, expert groups and inter-agency task forces.

5. In the mid-1990s, a new mechanism was introduced which was intended to complement the existing processes for the development and adoption of international statistical standards by being less rigid and able to adapt more quickly to changing conditions. The main characteristics of this new mechanism were: flexibility in

[1] The consultant, Mr. Hermann Habermann, former director of the Statistics Division, worked from October to December 2017 and delivered his final report on 19 December 2017. In addition to a desk study, the consultant met with Statistics Division staff that act as liaison for city groups. All existing city groups contributed by replying to a short questionnaire.

[2] Groups that were listed in Statistical Commission reports include: committee of experts, city groups, interagency task force, expert group, high-level group, global working group, friends of the chair, partnership group, committee of chief statisticians.

operating methods and timely adjustment to new priorities; the need to receive a mandate directly from the Statistical Commission; and the necessity of considering the needs of all countries. This new mechanism came to be called city groups.[3]

6. Currently, there are nine active city groups; seven more groups were set up and have now completed their work.[4] The topics taken up by the early city groups were often those of the traditional work of a national statistical office, for example, prices and business registers. Leadership within the groups was provided by the national statistical offices on an ad hoc basis. No secretariat was provided by the international agencies and the governance of each individual city group was left up to the organizers and attendees. The meetings were organized by representatives from a national statistical office. Participants were expected to provide for their own funding. Once chartered, each city group then — subject to review and guidance by the Statistical Commission — had considerable flexibility to set its own agenda and working rules.

7. In addition to the examination of current topics of methodological interest, many of the groups also developed manuals and compendiums of best practices or contributed to international standards. Examples include a chapter on the informal sector in the updated 2008 System of National Accounts (SNA) provided by the Delhi Group; the "Handbook for compiling statistics for economies based on natural resources" compiled by the Ulaanbaatar Group on Statistics for Economies Based on Natural Resources (see also E/CN.3/2018/12); and the set of test questions on disability statistics developed by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics.

8. From the outset, the relationship between the city groups and international actors such as expert groups and task forces was ambiguous. In the development of outputs, and in particular with respect to implementation, it has not necessarily been clear where city group responsibilities end and those of others begin. This ambiguity can be useful by creating flexibility for city groups but care must be taken to ensure that city group outputs are integrated appropriately into the international statistical system of norms and subsequently implemented effectively. Good examples of such integration are: the manual on capital stock and flow measurement which was developed by the Canberra Group on Capital Stock Statistics and subsequently published by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 2001 and which has become part of the reference documentation on the 1993 SNA; another example is the work of the Voorburg Group on Service Statistics, which works with other international organizations, such as OECD and the International Monetary Fund, and other international groups to set agendas that are relevant, to provide conceptual clarifications or to outline issues related to current practices and to avoid duplication of efforts by others. For example, the Voorburg Group has consulted with the Ottawa Group on Price Indices on conceptual questions related to quality adjustment. Another example is the steering committee of the Ottawa Group, which ensures the continuity and evolution of the Group's activities and coordination with other international activities on price statistics, such as the meetings of the Group of Experts on Consumer Price Indices, and the Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics.

[3] Each group is named after the first city in which it meets. Meeting locations often rotate after the first one but the name remains.

[4] See Statistics division website, https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/citygroups/.

III. The role of the Statistics Division and other international organizations: ideal anchors for the global statistical system

9. At the time city groups were created it was envisioned that the Statistics Division would have two critical roles to play. The first was to ensure that the requirements and suggestions of less developed countries and others which did not have the resources to participate in a city group were still considered by the city group. The Division occupies a central place in the international statistical system and one of its responsibilities is to work with national statistical offices, regional commissions and international agencies to understand the needs of less developed countries. It was intended that the Division would participate in the city groups and ensure that the voices of the less developed countries would be heard and considered — even if they were not able to be present. Moreover, the Division would be an interlocutor with less developed countries with respect to the deliberations of the city group. The second important role of the Division was to ensure that the development work of the city group was integrated appropriately into the international statistical system. This was in some cases achieved through a process of global consultation, providing all countries with an opportunity to provide inputs, before a city group product was brought — through the secretariat services of the [illegible] Commission — to the Commission for endorsement.

10. Other international organizations have also played a role in the city group mechanism. Many city groups seem to have been successful in working with international agencies and expert groups to integrate the work of the city groups into the international system. A successful example of this is the Wye group on statistics on rural development and agriculture household income, in which the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations was not only highly active until the completion of its mandate in 2012 but continues to implement the work by the Group with a newly created successor interagency and expert group. The case of the Wye group is an excellent example of how the work of the city group, once concluded, is continued by a more permanent and more formal structure, the inter-agency and expert group, which has replaced the Wye Group and a friends of the chair group in the area of agricultural statistics.

11. Unfortunately, a review of city group activities — including contributions provided by the chairs of the city groups — indicates that, for many city groups, representation from the full spectrum of national statistical offices is still a problem. This seems to be for one or more of the following reasons: inadequate travel funds; the predominant use of English by city groups and insufficient numbers of staff with the required expertise. In addition, it appears that the Statistics Division does not possess the resources to provide the level of sponsorships that would be required for adequate representation from less developed countries. Neither does the Division have the monetary or human resources to attend city group meetings regularly in all areas. On the other hand, it is not evident whether and to what extent modern communication tools have been used or can be used in the future to alleviate such concerns. Therefore the hope that the Division would be able to ensure that the city groups heard the voices of less developed countries has not been fully realized.

12. Resource problems also sometimes present a difficulty with regard to ensuring that methodological work from the city groups is integrated into the international statistical system. While, in theory, the central place that the Statistics Division, [illegible] other international specialized agencies, occupies in the international statistical system, provides it with the opportunity to ensure that the work and output

of the city groups are coordinated, duly take into consideration the views of the full spectrum of national statistical offices and conform to existing international standards, in practice, financial and human resource constraints prevent the Division and international agencies from playing the roles of anchors to ensure that the city group outputs surpass the confines of the city groups and reach the global statistical system at large. This becomes particularly important where some city groups have become involved not only with methodology development but also with implementation.

IV. The role of the Statistical Commission: oversight and guidance

13. Overall, the Chairs of the city groups reported that they were generally satisfied with the guidance and oversight provided by the Commission. On the other hand, from the perspective of the Statistical Commission, some concerns could be raised relating to the frequency, relevance and type of reporting. Each city group responds on a more or less regular basis according to the Commission's multi-year programme and as determined by the groups' own determination. Some groups report almost yearly on their deliberations, while others may see an interval of several years between reports. Moreover, city groups do not regularly indicate in their reports how they have responded to guidance received by the Commission in previous sessions. In recent years, city groups have generally reported under information items unless the group was seeking explicit endorsement for a specific output.

14. It is also important to note that the city groups were intended to work with maximum flexibility and with a minimum of bureaucratic oversight. At the same time, statistics have become more central to national and international decision-making, more interrelated and even integrated, especially in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Thus, where once city groups may have operated with substantial freedom and without the need for coordination, the situation has now changed. A new development is the increasing interest of non-official data partners and even users in participating in the work of some city groups.

15. However, the agenda of the Statistical Commission now, as compared with that of 20 years ago, indicates the increased demands on the Commission during its one-week meeting. Certainly, the number of items that the Commission considers and the time available to it may make substantive discussion at each session and for each city group impossible. For example, at the forty-ninth session of the Commission, in 2018, the comprehensive discussion of the item "disability statistics" and thereunder the review of the development work and implementation plans of the Washington group will require due time allocation. Naturally, not every report of every group would require this level of discussion every year. But some regular substantive discussion, especially at strategically critical moments of the work of a city group is surely required.

V. Points for discussion

16. **The Commission is invited to express its views on the following questions:**

(a) **Is there a need for the Commission to improve its oversight function, and how could this be done without hindering the intended flexibility in the operating methods of city groups?**

(b) **Should the Commission systematically carry out a comprehensive review of the work of one or two city groups each year?**

(c) **How can more balanced participation in city groups be ensured?**

(d) **What is the specific role of the city groups vis-à-vis other groups operating under the auspices of the Commission?**

(e) **How can the work and outputs of the city groups be better integrated into the global statistical system?**

(f) **After their initial mandate is completed, should city groups be terminated or transitioned into another existing and more formal mechanism (rather than having their mandate extended), as seen in the example of the Wye Group (see para. 10)?**

17. **The Commission is invited to request the Bureau to prepare, for the fiftieth session, a comprehensive review of the structure of all groups (city groups, expert groups, inter-agency groups, friends of the chair, etc.) operating under the Commission.**

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Demographic statistics

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, which was prepared in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2017/228 and past practices, presents activities carried out by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat in the area of demographic statistics. It provides a summary of the implementation of the 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme over the past year, with a focus on the development and promotion of the newly developed guidelines on the use of electronic data collection technologies in population and housing censuses for the current population and housing census round. It provides information on activities relating to the promotion of the revised set of international statistical standards for civil registration and vital statistics and the development of the handbook on the operations and management of civil registration, vital statistics and identity management systems. It also provides information on the collection of demographic statistics through the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires and presents a summary overview of an expert group meeting on migration statistics.

The Commission is invited to take note of the report.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report, which was prepared in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2017/228 and past practices, presents activities carried out by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat in the area of demographic statistics.

II. 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme

2. The 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme was approved by the Statistical Commission at its forty-sixth session and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2015/10. The Programme serves as recognition that population and housing censuses are among the main sources of data for effective development planning and objective decision-making, especially in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Programme is aimed at ensuring that each Member State conducts a population and housing census at least once during the period 2015–2024 and disseminates the resulting census statistics on population and housing in as comprehensive and holistic manner as possible.

3. In that context, the Statistics Division undertook the process of revising and updating the major international statistical standard for population and housing censuses, the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*, and the third revision of that set of recommendations was adopted by the Statistical Commission at its forty-sixth session.

4. Building on those principles and recommendations, as well as on the revised *Handbook on the Management of Population and Housing Censuses*, the completion of which was reported to the Statistical Commission at its forty-eighth session, the Statistics Division organized and conducted, with the support of the World Bank and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), three workshops on the theme "2020 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses: international standards and contemporary technologies", held in Lusaka in March 2017; in Lagos, Nigeria, in May 2017; and in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, in June 2017, with the participation of English-speaking and Portuguese-speaking African countries.

5. Taking into consideration that the 2020 round of population and housing censuses (2015–2024) will be substantially different in terms of the role of contemporary technologies, primarily the use of tablet computers and self-enumeration using the Internet, the Statistics Division, in close coordination with the regional commissions of the United Nations, undertook the preparation of the *Guidelines on the Use of Electronic Data Collection Technologies in Population and Housing Censuses*, the final draft of which was deliberated and agreed upon at a task force meeting held in Cairo in January 2017. The *Guidelines* are designed as an online, live document that will be updated with national experiences and further elaboration as they become available throughout the 2020 census round. The posting of the *Guidelines* coincides with the forty-ninth session of the Statistical Commission.

6. The Statistics Division, together with UNFPA and the United States Census Bureau, is coordinating activities related to population and housing censuses through the International Committee on Census Coordination, which meets at least twice a year.

7. The Statistics Division will, as in previous rounds, organize workshops to promote the revised principles and recommendations and other methodological materials, targeting all regions. Detailed schedules, subject matter and information on participating countries and partners will be regularly posted on the website of the 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme.

III. Implementation of the *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3*

8. On the basis of the *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3*, endorsed by the Statistical Commission at its forty-fifth session, and the proceedings of the expert group meeting held in February 2017 on the management and evaluation of civil registration and vital statistics systems, the Statistics Division completed the revision of the *Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems: Management, Operation and Maintenance*, as announced to the Commission at its forty-eighth session. Subsequently, the Division designed and conducted regional workshops to introduce and promote the revised set of international standards and the operations of civil registration, vital statistics and identity management systems. The workshops were held in Bogota in October 2017 for South American countries and in Hanoi in November 2017 for South-East and East Asian countries. The workshops introduced a newly developed curriculum intended to provide training to statisticians, civil registrars, public health officers and identity management professionals on the development of a holistic model for ensuring interoperability between the registration of vital events, the production of regular and reliable vital statistics, and identity management systems. The Division will continue to organize workshops to promote the revised principles and recommendations and other methodological materials on the holistic approach to the functioning of civil registration, vital statistics and identity management systems, targeting all regions of the world.

9. The Statistics Division has initiated the preparation of three additional methodological outputs, as follows: (a) the Division is preparing the *Guidelines for Assessing the Quality and Completion of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics*, intended to elaborate on two dimensions of quality — evaluation of quality assurance systems and processes and data quality assessment — including the presentation of national practices in that respect; the *Guidelines* are designed to be an online, live document that will be regularly updated; (b) the current version of the *Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems: Preparation of a Legal Framework* was issued 20 years ago; consequently, the Division developed an annotated outline of the revised *Handbook* that was presented and discussed at the technical seminar on a legal framework for civil registration, vital statistics and identity management systems, held in Manila in July 2017, with the support of the Asian Development Bank; on the basis of that outline, work on a revised version of the *Handbook* is now under way; and (c) the current version of the *Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems: Developing Information, Education and Communication* was also issued 20 years ago; consequently, the Division is undertaking its revision, especially taking into consideration contemporary methods and techniques related to communication and education with regard to the necessity of registering vital events.

10. The Division continues to serve as the secretariat for the Global Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Group and maintains the accompanying website, which provides information on the activities of all members of the Group relating to improving civil registration and vital statistics. The Group elaborated on various projects and programmes carried out by members of the group, ensuring a coordinated approach and the use of international standards and recommendations.

IV. Collection of statistics through the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires

11. The Statistics Division collects, compiles and disseminates annually official demographic and social statistics for all countries and areas of the world. The data are collected via a set of annual and census questionnaires dispatched to the National Statistical Offices. The data collected refer to population distribution and composition by several characteristics, including the population of cities and urban agglomerations, fertility, mortality, nuptiality, annual migration flows, migrant stock according to the population censuses, household characteristics, housing characteristics, economic characteristics and levels of education. The traditional form of dissemination is the *Demographic Yearbook* collection, published annually since 1948.[1]

12. The following overview represents an update with regard to the paper presented to the Statistical Commission at its forty-eighth session and focuses on the availability of vital statistics collected from the national statistical offices, which is measured as the availability of the main datasets for each vital event published in the *Demographic Yearbook 2016*, the latest published edition.[2] The annex to the present report contains a table presenting the availability of each listed dataset in terms of the number of countries or areas that submitted data published in the *Demographic Yearbook 2016* as a percentage of the total number of countries or areas of the world.

13. Broadly speaking, the availability of a vital statistic is measured as the percentage of the total number of countries or areas of the world submitting relevant data. With respect to the vital statistics presented in the *Demographic Yearbook 2016*, that availability was as follows (in descending order): live births by urban or rural residence, 72 per cent; deaths by urban or rural residence, 70 per cent; live births by age of mother and sex of child, and deaths by age and sex, 64 per cent each; marriages by urban or rural residence, 56 per cent; marriages by age of groom and by age of bride, 46 per cent; infant deaths by urban or rural residence, 53 per cent; infant deaths by age and sex, 46 per cent; divorces by urban or rural residence, 49 per cent; live births by age of father, and late fetal deaths by urban or rural residence, 37 per cent each; legally induced abortions, 26 per cent; and legally induced abortions by age of woman, 21 per cent.

14. As presented in the *Demographic Yearbook 2016*, around three quarters of the total number of countries or areas of the world have submitted to the United Nations overall statistics on total births and deaths. The share steadily decreases, however, with the introduction of additional variables, such as age, and with respect to other units of vital statistics enumeration, such as fetal deaths.

V. Activities related to migration statistics

15. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other recent global policy documents on international migration, including the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, call for timely and fit-for-purpose migration data and

[1] Editions of the *Demographic Yearbook* are available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2.htm. Demographic data, especially population and housing census data, are incrementally published online to the UNdata portal at http://data.un.org/.

[2] At the time of reporting (November 2017). By the time the present report is submitted to the Statistical Commission in March 2018, the *Demographic Yearbook 2016* will be available.

statistics. In June 2017, the Statistics Division organized and conducted an expert group meeting on improving migration data in the context of the 2030 Agenda, held in New York, and addressed the lack of comprehensive migration statistics. The experts identified the existing gaps in migration statistics and made a number of recommendations on the collection, compilation and dissemination of data and methodological development, coordination and capacity-building for the improvement of international migration statistics.

16. In particular, the experts agreed on taking a step-wise approach in defining migratory status for monitoring the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. As a first step, migratory status could be classified, in accordance with national practices and regardless of legal status, as: (a) native-born and foreign-born persons; and (b) citizens and non-citizens (including stateless persons). Furthermore, countries were invited to disaggregate the data by additional relevant variables in order to produce comprehensive migration statistics. Subject to future technical refinement, the experts also agreed on a subset of Sustainable Development Goal indicators as relevant to migration, to guide priority-setting in developing methodologies for measuring migration-relevant Sustainable Development Goal indicators and in assisting countries in producing data for those indicators. Methodological guidelines were to be developed with respect to how to produce data for migration-relevant Sustainable Development Goal indicators, focusing on data disaggregation.[3]

17. The Statistics Division will also launch the eleventh tranche of the Development Account project entitled "Collection and use of international migration data in the context of the 2030 Agenda", for the period 2018–2021. The project will be led by the Statistics Division, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Division, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The guidelines on the production of migration-relevant Sustainable Development Goal indicators requested by the participants in the expert group meeting described in paragraph 16 above will be one of the major outputs of the project. The project also comprises capacity-building activities for countries in Asia and Latin America in terms of the implementation of the international standards for migration statistics and the production of data for migration-relevant Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

18. The Statistics Division will organize, in collaboration with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, IOM and the United Nations Population Division, the first forum on international migration statistics, to be held in Paris on 15 and 16 January 2018. Mobilizing expertise from a wide range of disciplines, such as political science, economics, demography, development, geospatial science, sociology, statistics and information technology, the forum will be aimed at exploring innovative ways to measure population mobility, generate timely statistics and create synergies between different stakeholders and perspectives, thereby helping to improve the global understanding of the migration phenomenon.

[3] The list of migration-relevant indicators is available from https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/meetings/2017/new-york--egm-migration-data-EGM%20Recommendations_FINAL.pdf.

Annex

Availability of vital statistics

	Number of countries	*Percentage*
Fertility		
Live births by urban or rural residence	172	72
Live births by age of mother and sex of child	153	64
Live births by age of father	87	37
Fetal mortality		
Late fetal deaths by urban or rural residence	89	37
Legally induced abortions	62	26
Legally induced abortions by age of woman	49	21
Infant mortality		
Infant deaths by urban or rural residence	127	53
Infant deaths by age and sex	110	46
General mortality		
Deaths by urban or rural residence	166	70
Deaths by age and sex	152	64
Nuptiality and divorce		
Marriages by urban or rural residence	134	56
Marriages by age of groom and by age of bride	110	46
Divorces by urban or rural residence	116	49

Source: Demographic Yearbook 2016.

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Gender statistics

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2017/228 and past practices. It provides a summary of the recent activities undertaken by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics under the umbrella of the Global Gender Statistics Programme. In the report, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics presents an update on the implementation of the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality project, including on the completion of the draft guidelines for the production of statistics on asset ownership and on entrepreneurship, from a gender perspective, and describes the revision of the minimum set of gender indicators to align it with the global Sustainable Development Goal indicators framework. It also reports on the organization of the eleventh meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics. Finally, it describes its activities and those of the Division aimed at strengthening gender data, under the Global Gender Statistics Programme. The Commission is invited to take note of the ongoing work and future priorities on gender statistics.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report introduces the work undertaken by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics in 2017 to fulfil the requests of the Statistical Commission contained in its decisions 42/102, 44/109 and 48/109, in terms of: (a) developing methodological guidelines for the production and use of gender statistics, including on the measurement of asset ownership and entrepreneurship under the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality project, and providing training and assistance to strengthen the capacity of countries to produce and disseminate gender statistics for policymaking; (b) maintaining and updating the minimum set of gender indicators[1] and aligning it with the global Sustainable Development Goal indicators, relevant for gender analysis; (c) serving as the coordination mechanism for the Global Gender Statistics Programme by, inter alia, convening the annual meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics. Furthermore, the report describes the ongoing and planned work by the Division and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics aimed at strengthening gender data at the national and international levels.

II. Guidelines for producing statistics on asset ownership and entrepreneurship, from a gender perspective

2. In 2017, the Statistics Division, under the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality project,[2] continued to develop the guidelines for producing statistics on asset ownership, from a gender perspective. As described in the report of the Secretary-General presented at the forty-eight session of the Statistical Commission,[3] the guidelines are the result of an extensive consultative process with national and international statistical and gender experts,[4] and are based on the results of testing and piloting different methods in seven countries.[5] They provide national statistical agencies and policymakers with guidance on collecting, processing, analysing and disseminating individual-level data on asset ownership for informing four broad sets of policy issues: (a) fostering women's empowerment, (b) fostering women's employment, (c) understanding livelihoods, and (d) reducing poverty and vulnerability. The guidelines introduce the concepts, definitions and data requirements for measuring asset ownership from a gender perspective in household surveys and provide guidance on planning, organizing and implementing a household survey, appending a module, or adding a minimum set of questions on asset ownership

[1] The minimum set of gender indicators was agreed upon by the Commission as a guide for the national production and international compilation of gender statistics (Commission decision 44/109). The latest country level data for the minimum set of gender indicators are available online at http://genderstats.un.org.

[2] The Evidence and Data for Gender Equality project is a joint initiative of the Statistics Division and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) aimed at accelerating existing efforts to improve the capacity of countries to produce relevant and high-quality gender statistics.

[3] See E/CN.3/2017/11.

[4] Experts include members of national statistical offices, academia, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank. In addition, the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality project has received guidance from the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics.

[5] Georgia, Maldives, Mexico, Mongolia, Philippines, South Africa and Uganda.

to a nationally-representative household survey. A draft version of the guidelines was presented at the forty-eight session of the Statistical Commission and the updated version will be disseminated online through the dedicated Evidence and Data for Gender Equality project portal, once finalized.

3. In November 2017, the Statistics Division in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), organized a seminar in Rome, on the methodology for producing statistics on asset ownership from a gender perspective. The seminar benefited from the participation of nearly 50 experts, including 28 from national statistical offices. It covered the key recommendations outlined in the guidelines, including how to define ownership of assets looking at a bundle of rights (documented ownership, as well as alienation rights); the list of recommended assets for data collection, highlighting priority and additional assets; the issue of valuing assets; the rationale for self-reported or self-declared data collection rather than proxy data, because collecting proxy data from the head of the household, as is standard in many countries, is likely to underestimate both women's and men's ownership of assets; data collection strategies; recommended approaches for sample design, focusing on household selection; and suggested data analysis and indicators, relevant for gender analysis of asset ownership and control. A similar seminar is planned for Asian countries in Manila, in December 2017, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and FAO.

4. The guidelines on producing statistics on entrepreneurship from a gender perspective, another output of the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality project, present a conceptual framework for consistent, comparable and relevant data collection on women's and men's entrepreneurship, providing a comprehensive description of gender differentials in entrepreneurial outcomes, namely entrepreneurial participation and enterprise performance. The guidelines are expected to help decision makers understand the main individual and contextual drivers of these differentials, including motivations, aspirations, resources and constraints to becoming an entrepreneur.

5. In 2017, the Statistics Division continued to consolidate technical inputs from the statistical community and other stakeholders into the guidelines on asset ownership, before finalizing them. The guidelines on entrepreneurship will benefit from recommendations from the International Labour Organization (ILO) on how to account for the ongoing revision of the international classification on the status of employment, to be presented at the twentieth International Conference of Labour Statisticians in October 2018 and, in particular, on how to account and subtract "dependent contractors" from the population of entrepreneurs. It is expected that the guidelines on entrepreneurship will be finalized by the end of 2017 as a technical report.

6. The Evidence and Data for Gender Equality project has been extended until the end of 2018 to promote the guidelines and provide training to national statisticians on how to adapt and operationalize the proposed statistical concepts and methods into their own national contexts. In collaboration with the regional commissions and other stakeholders, three regional meetings for national statistical offices have been planned for 2018 in Africa, Asia and Latin America, respectively. Also in 2018, the project team will continue to provide ad hoc technical assistance to countries that express interest in collecting data on asset ownership from a gender perspective.

III. Minimum set of gender indicators and the global Sustainable Development Goals indicators related to gender

7. The minimum set of gender indicators was identified by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics and was agreed upon by the Statistical Commission as a guide for the national production and international compilation of gender statistics, through its decision 44/109 in 2013. In 2014, the first data platform for the minimum set[a] was launched, with features that allowed users to explore data and metadata for all tier I indicators.[b] A new platform was developed in 2016 with increased browsing speed and improved features in terms of data querying and exploring, and data visualization and interpretation. As at the end of 2017, the platform disseminates data for all 45 quantitative and 11 qualitative indicators under tier I and tier II, covering such dimensions as education, employment, health, human rights of women and girls, and public life and decision-making.

8. The selection of the minimum set of gender indicators was guided by the primary criterion that indicators should address key policy concerns as identified in the Beijing Platform for Action and other, more recent international commitments. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics established the Advisory Group on Global Gender Statistics and Indicators Database, with the objective of reviewing the global Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework to identify potential discrepancies with the minimum set of gender indicators. An initial assessment highlighted around 80 Sustainable Development Goal indicators relevant to gender analysis.

9. In 2017, the Advisory Group on Global Gender Statistics and Indicators Database further reviewed the Sustainable Development Goal indicators from a gender perspective and proposed selected modifications to the minimum set of gender indicators to align the two sets, while still maintaining the consistency of the latter with the Beijing Platform for Action. The Advisory Group took into account only current indicators in the global Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework and agreed to keep to a minimum the changes proposed to the minimum set, to ensure consistency in time series, particularly for those countries that have been using the thematic set for several years.

10. The assessment presented at the eleventh meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics, held in October 2017, resulted in 23 indicators being matched between the minimum set and the gender-relevant Sustainable Development Goal indicators, including 8 indicators identified as identical (same indicator in terms of definitions and concepts), 12 indicators identified as similar (differences in the population or in the disaggregation dimensions covered), and 3 indicators identified as related (covering the same or similar theme and/or area). During the review of the minimum set, the Advisory Group on Global Gender Statistics and Indicators Database also identified three tier III indicators without data

[a] The minimum set of gender indicators is available online at http://genderstats.un.org.

[b] The term "tier I indicators" refers to those that are conceptually clear, include an agreed international definition and are regularly produced by countries. "Tier II indicators" refers to those that are conceptually clear and include an agreed international definition but are not yet regularly produced by countries. "Tier III indicators" refers to those for which international standards need to be developed.

and without plans for methodological development and decided to further investigate the possibility of replacing them.[9]

11. Because of the need to further discuss the potential replacement of the three tier III indicators described above, it was agreed that the Advisory Group would continue its consultation for another year. The final proposal of the Advisory Group will be presented at the meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics in 2018.

IV. Eleventh meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics

12. The eleventh meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics was organized in Rome, on 30 and 31 October 2017, by the Statistics Division and it was hosted by FAO. Around 60 experts on gender statistics participated in the meeting, including 31 experts from 27 national statistical offices,[10] four regional commissions,[11] 12 international organizations[12] and the International Union for Conservation of Nature. The meeting was chaired by Statistics Finland and the Statistics Division acted as secretariat of the Group.

13. During the meeting, the methodological developments for measuring specific areas of gender concerns, relevant for monitoring global Sustainable Development Goal indicators, were reviewed and discussed, such as: measuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights; measuring intra-household power and decision-making; measuring the nexus between gender and the environment; measuring violence against women; monitoring the presence of legal frameworks for gender equality, and of gender budgeting, at the country level; and measuring asset ownership from a gender perspective. The meeting also took stock of and discussed national practices in measuring and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals from a gender perspective, based on the experiences shared by Japan, India and Italy. Finally, the meeting discussed data disaggregation dimensions and categories for the indicators under Sustainable Development Goal 5 on achieving

[9] The monitored set indicators without data and or plans for methodological development are: (15) Employment rate of persons aged 25-49 with a child under age 3 living in a household and with no children living in the household, by sex (ILO); (16) Proportion of children under age 3 in formal care (OECD); and (19) Proportion of households with access to mass media (radio, television, Internet), by sex of household head (International Telecommunication Union). The Advisory Group proposed the following potential replacements, to be further discussed: (1) Sustainable Development Goal indicator 5.6.1 on the proportion of women aged 15 to 49 years of age who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care (United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)); (2) an indicator measuring the nexus between women and the environment (to be proposed by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)); and (3) an indicator on homicides by an intimate partner (part of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 16.1.1), as a proxy for femicides (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)).

[10] Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Finland, Georgia, Ghana, India, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Philippines, Republic of Moldova, South Africa, Uganda, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

[11] Economic Commission for Africa, Economic Commission for Europe, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

[12] ADB, EAG, ILO, OECD, UNEP, Institute for Statistics of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNFPA, UN Women, United Nations on Drugs and Crime, UN-Women, the World Health Organization and the World Bank.

gender equality and empowering all women and girls,[12] to contribute to the ongoing related work stream of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goal Indicators; and agreed on selected amendments to the minimum set of gender indicators (see section III above for further details).

14. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics agreed on its 2018 annual programme of work, which includes the following:

(a) The Statistics Division, as secretariat, is to link the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics portal to regional gender statistics e-learning and toolkits portals maintained by the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic Commission for Europe and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia;

(b) The Economic Commission for Europe, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Bank are to report back to the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics on their next steps to further develop methods to measure intra-household power and decision-making; the nexus between gender and environment; and poverty at the individual level;

(c) The World Health Organization is to report back to the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics on the work of the Inter-Agency Group on Measuring Violence against Women, including on the efforts to harmonize statistics on the prevalence of selected forms of violence for international estimates and global monitoring;

(d) The Statistics Division is to reflect the agreed changes in the minimum set of gender indicators to align it with the global Sustainable Development Goal indicators framework;

(e) The Advisory Group on Global Gender Statistics and Indicators Database is to continue the discussion on the three indicators proposed for replacement in the minimum set of gender indicators and report back to the group;

(f) The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics is to continue to work on data disaggregation dimensions and categories for gender relevant Sustainable Development Goal indicators, for the consideration of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goal Indicators;

(g) The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics is to provide inputs and contribute to the organization of the 2018 Global Forum on Gender Statistics in Japan;

(h) The twelfth annual meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics is to be convened in 2018.

V. The way forward

15. In 2018, under the Global Gender Statistics Programme, the work of the Statistics Division and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics will include the activities agreed upon by the Group at its eleventh meeting, including activities related to Sustainable Development Goal indicators and data disaggregation; the activities under the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality

[12] The group reviewed and agreed with the dimensions and categories for the following Sustainable Development Goal indicators: 5.2.1, 5.2.2 (age groups and place of occurrence), 5.4.1 (age groups and location), and 5.a.1 (type of agriculture land tenure).

project, and the activities carried out under the gender statistics and indicators component of the Programme on Statistics and Data under the tenth tranche of the United Nations Development Account.[11] That component of the Programme will focus on strengthening statistical capacity of countries in terms of making better use of existing data and in communicating gender indicators, in producing gender statistics in selected areas including on time use and violence against women, and in understanding the gender dimension in emerging areas such as environment and climate change.

16. In 2018, the Statistics Division, in collaboration with the Government of Japan (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and the Cabinet Office) and relevant international agencies and development partners, will organize and convene the twelfth meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics and the seventh Global Forum on Gender Statistics in Japan.

17. Last, the Statistics Division, in collaboration with experts from national, regional and international agencies and academia, will initiate research to update the United Nations guidelines for the production of statistics on time use, in line with the International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics and other agreed methodologies. The guidelines will provide options for collecting time-use data using innovative approaches.

VI. Summary and conclusions

18. The Statistical Commission is invited to take note of the work carried out in 2017 and planned for 2018 by the Statistics Division and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics.

[11] The tenth tranche of the Development Account covers the period 2016–2019. The Programme on Statistics and Data is a comprehensive project centred on the strengthening of national statistical systems to measure, monitor and report on the Sustainable Development Goals. It is jointly implemented by 10 entities: the Statistics Division, UNEP, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNODC, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the Economic Commission for Europe, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

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Report of the World Bank on poverty statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2017/228 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the World Bank on poverty statistics. Because reducing poverty is a goal in both national and international development agendas, poverty statistics are central to monitoring development progress. The report has four purposes: (a) to identify concepts, definitions, methods and data requirements commonly utilized in government measurement of national poverty, with a focus on monetary poverty; (b) to summarize the history and foundation of international poverty measures and to explain how international poverty statistics rely on national data, methods and definitions; (c) to assess the availability of poverty statistics, highlight data gaps, and review the challenges associated with comparability and disaggregation; and (d) to outline means of improving national and international poverty statistics so as to better report progress towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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Report of the World Bank on poverty statistics

I. Introduction

1. Reducing poverty is a headline goal in the international development agenda. The first target of the Millennium Development Goals was to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people living in extreme poverty. The first of the Sustainable Development Goals, which were adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, is to end poverty in all its forms everywhere by 2030.[1] National Governments, development agencies and non-governmental organizations are also committed to reducing, and ultimately eradicating, poverty in all its multiple forms and dimensions. Thus, monitoring the number of people who live in poverty has become increasingly important for national Governments and statistical offices, as well as for international organizations.

2. Sustainable Development Goal 1 sets out both national and international measures of poverty. Target 1.1 ("By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than $1.25 a day") is tracked by indicator 1.1.1, which measures the "proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)" (see General Assembly resolution 71/313 of 6 July 2017, annex). Reflecting the recognition that countries have different notions of poverty, the aim of target 1.2 is "by 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions". This target is measured by indicators 1.2.1 ("Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age") and 1.2.2 ("Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions"). Disaggregation by groups and monitoring poverty in "all its dimensions" raise challenges for current approaches to poverty statistics — challenges not confronted within the context of the Millennium Development Goals.

3. Although national household surveys and poverty measurements are the foundation for the production of all poverty statistics, national and international, there is substantial heterogeneity exhibited in terms of how poverty is measured and in the resulting statistics, not only between countries but also within countries over time. The present report both summarizes customary methods for measuring poverty and illustrates how national data and methods inform international poverty measures. One goal is to review the approaches to measuring poverty commonly used by statistical offices and international organizations and to assess how well the poverty statistics available respond to the poverty-related goals and reporting requirements under the Sustainable Development Goals. This report does not, however, provide an exhaustive review of various conceptualizations and methods used. Its main focus is on measures of monetary poverty. The increasing use of non-monetary measures merits a separate report.

4. The availability of both national and international poverty statistics improved considerably during the Millennium Development Goals period, but the gaps are still substantial. In particular, the focus of the Sustainable Development Goals on leaving no one behind and disaggregating by subgroups, such as sex, age, employment status

[1] For details, see https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg1 and the report of the Economic and Social Council of 5 May 2017 (E/2017/64), entitled "Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions through promoting sustainable development, expanding opportunities and addressing related challenges".

and geographical location, poses several new data- and measurement-related challenges. Although, on the whole, more data are available, they are not always comparable within countries over time or across countries owing to differing measurement methods. Clearly, continued investment in and strengthening capacity for household survey work will be crucial.

5. The scope of this report encompasses: a review of common poverty measurement concepts, definitions, and methods (sect. II); an outline of the data requirements for measuring national poverty (sect. III); a summary of the history of international poverty measures and a discussion on how international poverty statistics rely on national definitions, methods, and data (sect. IV); an assessment of the availability of poverty statistics, the data gaps and the comparability- and disaggregation-related difficulties that can arise (sect. V); and an outline of the means of improving national and international poverty statistics, especially in terms of reporting on progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (sect. VI).

II. Concepts and methods: an overview[2]

6. To measure poverty, it is fundamental to define one or multiple dimensions of welfare against which to assess whether people are deprived. The present section discusses (a) concepts underlying measurement of both monetary (consumption and income) and non-monetary welfare and (b) how countries usually estimate poverty in terms of monetary welfare.

A. Measures of welfare

1. Monetary measures of welfare

7. Although welfare and poverty are inherently multidimensional concepts, in national and international poverty statistics, consumption and income are commonly used as measures of welfare. Consumption and income refer to the resources people absorb or have command over. The consumption measure is based on the estimated value of food and non-food items consumed by households. Non-food items often include clothing, services, transportation and the estimated use value of housing and durable goods. To the extent that market prices reflect, at least in part, the relative value that people place on these items, the valuation of consumption is a useful indicator of general welfare.[3] Because these measures cover many different items (or, for income, the ability to purchase these different items), the measures can be thought of as reflecting multidimensional aspects of welfare, where the price for each item provides a relative "weight" for each dimension.

8. Not all components of welfare can be acquired in markets, however: markets are imperfect and for some dimensions of welfare, no market exists, i.e., the conditions set out in footnote 3 below do not hold in practice. Thus, a monetary

[2] While the Statistical Commission did decide to create an Expert Group on Poverty Statistics (Rio Group) at its 1996 session, poverty measurement has not been discussed at the recent sessions of the Commission. In September 2006, the Rio Group published a *Compendium of Best Practices in Poverty Measurement* (Rio de Janeiro, September 2006) which brought together a variety of perspectives on the measurement, interpretation and use of poverty statistics.

[3] Economic theory suggests that if markets were complete and perfectly efficient (with, e.g., no missing markets, public goods, or externalities), prices would reflect social assessments of value, and the value of total consumption would be a statistic sufficient for measuring welfare.

measure alone cannot fully reflect key dimensions of welfare, such as life expectancy, public goods and services, security and freedom. Such aspects can in some instances be measured directly, in multidimensional approaches to assessing poverty, as discussed below.

9. Income and consumption are often treated as if they are interchangeable, but it is important to distinguish between them, both conceptually and in terms of the reliability of the estimates they produce. Income provides a measure of *opportunities* to consume and save for the future. Consumption, which reflects the *realization* of those opportunities, is a more direct measure of material welfare. Thus, income and consumption can be considered complementary measures of welfare. However, consumption is typically viewed as, conceptually, the preferred measure of monetary welfare to be used in poverty measurement.[4] The importance of such conceptual distinctions is reflected in the following example: for someone to live with zero consumption is an implausibility but there are many people with zero income over a given period who in fact may not be poor. Given the prevalence of zero incomes in survey data, the distinction between consumption and income is particularly important in terms of "ending" poverty — a goal that may be unattainable if the measure is income.

10. Despite the preference for consumption conceptually, the reliability of *measured* consumption and income varies significantly. In highly informal economies, for example, where a significant proportion of the population are subsistence farmers, it is typically assumed that people can answer questions about what they consume much more reliably than about their income. In contrast, in countries where most people are engaged in formal labour markets and receive paychecks regularly, reported monthly income may be more reliable than recollections of everything that has recently been consumed.

11. In aggregating income and consumption data for the purpose of poverty analysis, households are often used as the unit of analysis;[5] however, the fact that households of different size and composition have different needs is not a trivial consideration. It is important that assessments of welfare take into account how needs vary between age groups and, potentially, according to the sex of household members.[6] Furthermore, needs may depend on the size of the household, reflecting the fact that larger households can economize on the purchase of some products, especially consumer durables.[7]

[4] Bruce D. Meyer and James X. Sullivan, "Measuring the well-being of the poor using income and consumption", *Journal of Human Resources*, vol. 38, Special issue on income volatility and implications for food assistance programs (2003), pp. 1180–1220. https://doi.org/10.2307/3558985.

[5] Angus Deaton and Salman Zaidi, *Guidelines for Constructing Consumption Aggregates for Welfare Analysis. Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) Working Paper*, No. 135 (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2002). Available at https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/14101.

[6] Brigitte Buhmann and others, "Equivalence scales, well-being, inequality, and poverty: sensitivity estimates across ten countries using the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) database", *Review of Income and Wealth*, vol. 34, No. 2 (June 1988), pp. 115–142. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4991.1988.tb00564.x.

[7] Peter Lanjouw and Martin Ravallion, "Poverty and household size", *Economic Journal*, vol. 105, No. 433 (November 1995), pp. 1415–1434. https://doi.org/10.2307/2235108.

2. Measures of welfare in multiple dimensions

12. Although monetary measures of welfare are the ones most commonly used by Governments for poverty today, the multidimensionality of welfare is not only widely recognized, but also embodied in the Sustainable Development Goal commitment to reducing poverty in all its forms and dimensions. Sustainable Development Goal target 1.2 (and indicator 1.2.2) explicitly refers to halving the proportion of men, women, and children of all ages living in poverty "in all its dimensions according to national definitions". Furthermore, even beyond the specific poverty goals and targets, many other Sustainable Development Goals can be considered to encompass dimensions of welfare relevant to the measurement of poverty.[8]

13. An individual's welfare can be measured beyond income or consumption in terms of health, nutrition status, literacy, freedom, security and subjective well-being (e.g., happiness and life satisfaction). It is beyond the scope of this report to review the wide range of methodologies proposed to assess the many dimensions of poverty comprehensively. [9] However, given the attention given by the Sustainable Development Goals to poverty, directly and indirectly, it is useful to summarize several common approaches to conceptualizing and measuring multidimensional poverty.

14. Of the two broad groups of methods used to measure multidimensional poverty, one group of methods assesses dimensions in isolation and often draws from a variety of surveys and administrative data. These are often referred to as "marginal methods", whereby deprivations can be displayed side by side, and are therefore also referred to as constituting a "dashboard approach". Although the approach can measure how many people live below a certain threshold in a certain dimension, it cannot easily assess how many people are deprived in a variety of ways. Each indicator or dimension is assessed independently; however, because this approach fails to reveal joint distributions, it cannot identify who is "multidimensionally poor". Examining each dimension separately may also reveal opposing trends, which can lead to ambiguous assessments of changes in overall welfare or poverty. To address the problem of how to interpret mixed signals arising from different dimensions, the multiple indices can be combined into a single measure; however, this approach still does not identify joint deprivations, which many consider central to assessing multidimensional poverty.

15. A second general approach extends beyond considering multiple measures side by side by focusing on overlapping deprivations, often using Venn diagrams to illustrate those overlaps. Another version of this approach relies on statistical techniques that collapse information on covariation of all the dimensions into a scalar ranking. This includes the application of techniques such as factor analysis, principal component analysis, multiple correspondence analysis and cluster analysis to assess correlations in deprivations and identify groups of individuals facing similar levels of joint deprivations. Other approaches include stochastic dominance analysis of joint deprivations; and analysis of fuzzy sets, which also examines joint deprivations, but

[8] See the report of 8 May 2017 of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council at its 2017 session (E/2017/69) entitled "Beyond gross domestic product: multidimensional poverty and the Sustainable Development Goals", for approaches to reducing multidimensional poverty.

[9] For details, see Sabina Alkire and others, *Multidimensional Poverty Measurement and Analysis* (Oxford, Oxford University Pres, 2015), chap. 3, entitled "Overview of methods for multidimensional poverty assessment", and Francisco H.G. Ferreira and Maria Ana Lugo, "Multidimensional poverty analysis: looking for a middle ground", *World Bank Research Observer*, vol. 28, No. 2 (August 2013), pp. 220–235, upon which the present section draws.

incorporates the ambiguity associated with identifying who is deprived. All of these approaches require that indicators for each dimension be captured for each household in a single data set, usually through a multi-topic survey.

16. A method used in many countries is the counting approach proposed by Alkire and Foster, which aggregates overlapping dimensions.[10] This method first identifies dimensions of poverty, followed by indicators for each dimension, and thresholds for each indicator below which individuals are considered deprived. The f dimensions in which each individual is deprived are then added up based on "importance" weights. A deprivation threshold, in terms of the count of weighted deprivations, is used to identify which individuals are multidimensionally poor. The proportion of the population that are deprived forms the headcount ratio of multidimensional deprivation. The simple headcount approach has been criticized for failing to satisfy "dimensional monotonicity", which requires that the index change if any individual ceases to be deprived in any dimension. Thus, Alkire and Foster propose an adjusted headcount ratio which multiplies the simple headcount ratio by average deprivation among the poor.

17. Because any country with a multi-topic household survey should be able, in theory, to develop a set of measures for multidimensional poverty, well-designed surveys will be vital for monitoring this goal.

B. Poverty lines for monetary measures

18. Once a measure of welfare is defined, the poverty line, below which an individual is considered poor, needs to be set. There are several approaches to setting the poverty line, three of which are described below.

1. Absolute poverty lines

19. *Cost of basic needs (CBN).* The cost of basic needs approach, often used to set the national poverty line, first estimates the cost of acquiring enough food for adequate nutrition, which is usually set at 1,800–2,300 calories per person per day, and then adds a component for essential non-food consumption, such as housing, clothing and other goods and services. This component is often assessed by examining the amount spent on non-food items by those who are consuming the minimum acceptable nutrition basket. The poverty line is the sum of basic food and non-food costs.

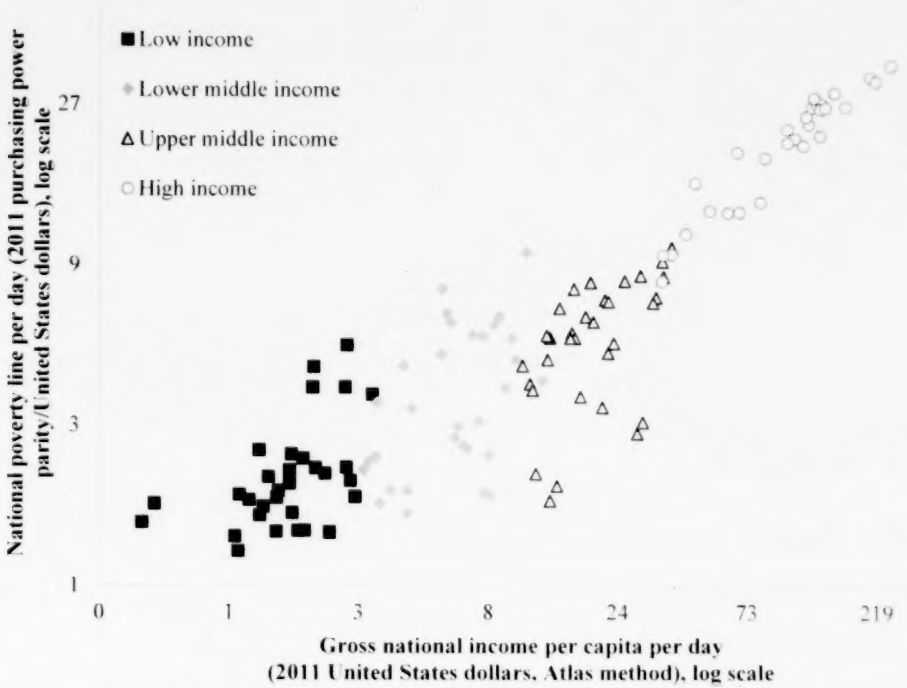
20. *Food-energy-intake (FEI) method.* An alternative approach used by some countries is the food-energy-intake method, which assesses the relationship between expenditure (or income) and caloric intake. The poverty line is defined as the average total spending on food and non-food items by those who are meeting basic caloric requirements. The food-energy-intake method is useful when detailed information on the price of food consumed is not available.

21. Cost of basic needs and food-energy-intake poverty lines are generally considered absolute. Updated for changes in prices over time, they continue to represent the same level of material welfare or absolute needs. However, such absolute poverty lines are typically higher in richer countries and are in fact revised

[10] Sabina Alkire and James Foster, "Counting and multidimensional poverty measurement", *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 95, Nos. 7–8 (August 2011), pp. 476–487.

upward as countries become richer (see figure I), which suggests that even definitions of absolute poverty have a relative element.

Figure I
Poverty lines across the world



Source: Dean Jolliffe and Espen Beer Prydz, "Estimating international poverty lines from comparable national thresholds", *Journal of Economic Inequality*, vol. 14, No. 2 (June 2016), pp. 185–198.

2. Relative poverty lines

22. The relative nature of poverty lines is made explicit when they are set as a constant proportion of the overall distribution of income or consumption of a society, often 50 or 60 per cent of median or mean income or consumption.[11] While relative poverty lines are common in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and European Union member countries, they can be somewhat confusing when everyone becomes better off but poverty does not drop. Specifically, if the relative poverty line is a fixed proportion of the mean or median income, and if everyone's income increases by the same percentage, poverty will remain unchanged.

[11] Sustainable Development Goal indicator 10.2.1 measures "Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by sex, age and persons with disabilities".

C. Measures of poverty

23. With a measure of welfare and a poverty line, it is possible to calculate measures of poverty in a society, in a group or in the world. Most popular is the poverty headcount ratio, which measures the share of the relevant population whose income or consumption is below the poverty line. The index is also often used in non-monetary measures of poverty to reflect the share of the population that does not reach a defined threshold, such as minimum years of education.

24. A second measure is the "poverty gap", which is affected by both the total number of poor people and the distance between the average standard of living of the poor and the poverty line. The poverty gap expresses average income shortfall as a proportion of the poverty line, where the average is for the entire population and counts the non-poor as having a shortfall of zero. For example, for a poverty gap of 0.05 the average shortfall is 5 per cent of the value of the poverty line. Multiplying the poverty gap by the value of the poverty line and the population provides an estimate of the income shortfall of the poor. The poverty gap is one of the Foster-Greer-Thorbecke poverty measures.[12]

25. Both measures can be calculated for individuals and households. Although data on living standards and poverty are generally based on household per capita consumption or income, poverty is typically defined in terms of individuals and is therefore most often reported in terms of the total number of poor individuals in a country.

III. Data sources

A. Household surveys

26. Household surveys are the most central data source for national and international poverty statistics. Most fundamentally, household surveys provide the data necessary to construct the welfare indicators used to measure poverty, such as total spending on consumption and total income. Consumption surveys also collect the data on food energy consumption used by many countries to set a poverty line. In measuring poverty, the most essential modules are those related to household consumption patterns for both food and non-food goods and services, as well as information on income from employment, self-employment, and business activities. Often, household surveys are also an important source of price data, either from the household consumption module or from separate price modules (see subsect. B below).

27. In isolation, the raw number or share of the poor is of limited usefulness to policymakers. However, when combined with a descriptive profile of the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the poor, along with determinants of poverty, this larger set of poverty statistics is of great value for the improved design of poverty reduction policies. For this reason, data collection for poverty statistics focuses on multi-topic household surveys which collect information on the many dimensions of living standards and economic activities. For example, while there is significant variation across countries with regard to what is included in the questionnaire, it is not uncommon for a household survey to collect information on

[12] James Foster, Joel Greer and Erik Thorbecke, "A class of decomposable poverty measures", *Econometrica*, vol. 52, No. 3 (May 1984), pp. 761–766.

sector of employment, sociodemographic variables like education, health, migration and fertility, and sometimes anthropometric information, such as the height and weight of children. These multi-topic household surveys are the primary sources used by analysts to inform policymakers on the factors underlying poverty and the candidate policies for reducing it.

B. Price data

28. Adjusting for time and space variations in prices is essential for correct comparisons of material welfare and ensuring that a poverty line reflects the same level of welfare in different places and at different times. To hold the monetary welfare measure (or poverty line) constant, intertemporal price indices are typically used. The most common is the national consumer price index (CPI), a measure of the value of a basket of goods and services typically consumed by households. Occasionally, alternative intertemporal deflators estimated from price or unit value data in household surveys or other sources are used, generally when consumer price index data are non-existent or of questionable accuracy.

29. Prices can vary not only across time but also across space within countries. For example, food and housing are typically cheaper in rural than in urban areas. Poverty analysts therefore often adjust for domestic spatial (geographical) price differences at a given point in time. Without such adjustments, living standards can be underestimated in areas with relatively lower prices and overestimated in areas where prices are higher. To reduce this type of error, many countries adjust prices either by using separate poverty lines for urban and rural areas (or other subnational geographies) or by adjusting consumption- and income-based welfare aggregates to account for price differences.

30. Useful adjustment of prices depends on good price data, which may be collected through household surveys, as part of the data collected for a parallel consumption or community price module, or though specialized price surveys, sometimes as part of data collection for the consumer price index.

C. Census and population data

31. Measurement of poverty also depends on many other aspects of the national statistical system. For instance, population data, typically from housing and population censuses, are used in sampling for household surveys and are essential for creating weights (adjustment factors that account for the varying probability of an individual's being included in the survey) to ensure that survey estimates are representative of the country or of specific geographical areas. Outdated or low-quality census data can lead to inefficient samples and thus to large margins of errors, or even biased estimates of poverty. Flawed population data can misestimate poverty by millions. Census data are also essential to producing geographical poverty estimates that are more granular than what are typically derived from household surveys. The small-area estimation technique combines poverty or consumption estimates from household surveys with census data to impute a spatially

disaggregated poverty measure using variables common to the household survey and the census.[17]

IV. Global measures of monetary poverty

32. Poverty measurement is typically a national exercise, with Governments conducting household surveys, other forms of data collection, and analysis, sometimes with technical assistance from international or regional bodies. These efforts usually entail assessing and comparing poverty within countries across time, groups and geographical areas. However, for purposes of international poverty statistics and comparisons, researchers and international organizations build on national data and methodologies to produce internationally comparable estimates. Thus, the production process and methodologies used for national and international poverty statistics are closely related to international poverty measurement depending fundamentally on availability of national household survey data, as well as national poverty statistics and methods.

A. Adjusting for price differences between countries

33. Income and consumption measures from national household surveys, and national poverty lines, are typically denominated in local currency units. To compare living standards between countries, however, consumption or income must be expressed in common units. While one option might be to use market currency exchange rates, it is widely recognized that these rates fail to accurately reflect relative purchasing power.[18] For example, one United States dollar converted at market exchange rates typically buys more goods and services in a low-income country than in the United States of America. One reason for this is that non-traded goods, and (especially) services, are typically cheaper in poorer countries.[19] Thus, using market exchange rates to convert consumption or income data underestimates the real standard of living in low-income countries.

34. International poverty measurement therefore uses exchange rates based on purchasing power parity (PPP) conversion factors for private consumption available from the International Comparison Program (ICP). These are essentially exchange rates that ensure that a dollar has the same purchasing power, in terms of the goods and services that it buys, across countries, thereby ensuring comparability.

35. PPP factors convert the value of consumption from the local currency unit into a common currency (i.e., the United States dollar) in a manner that allows for comparability across countries. PPPs actually enter international poverty calculations at two stages. First, they are used in estimating an international poverty line based on national poverty lines (see sect. VI on international poverty statistics). Then, to assess poverty in each country, PPPs are used to convert the international poverty line into

[17] Chris Elbers, Jean O. Lanjouw and Peter Lanjouw, "Micro-level estimation of poverty and inequality", *Econometrica*, vol. 71, No. 1 (January 2003), pp. 355–364. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0262.00399.

[18] Alan M. Taylor and Mark P. Taylor, "The purchasing power parity debate", *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 18, No. 4 (fall 2004), pp. 135–158. https://doi.org/10.1257/0895330042632744.

[19] Jacob A. Frenkel, "Collapse of purchasing power parities during the 1970s", *European Economic Review*, vol. 16 (May 1981), pp. 145–165.

local estimates or, especially, to convert consumption and income distributions from local currencies to PPP dollars.

B. Defining and updating international poverty lines

16. The precise methods used to measure poverty internationally have changed over time, but one guiding principle throughout has been to anchor estimates on national methods of poverty measurement and data.[7] The international extreme poverty line has typically been set to reflect how the world's poorest countries estimate a minimum threshold of living that meets basic needs in their societies. Absolute national poverty lines, when well constructed, are anchored on core caloric needs but also reflect country context and thus allow for substantial variation in non-food needs. The requirements for being considered poor are often debated by national politicians, civil society and the press, which can often ensure a common understanding of what are minimum needs.

17. Among the first to estimate international poverty were Ahluwalia, Carter and Chenery, who used India's national poverty threshold to estimate the prevalence of poverty in the world, using 1975 PPP figures.[8] Their estimate was based on consumption and income data for 25 countries. Not only was this the first attempt to measure global poverty against a common absolute poverty line but it also inaugurated the practice of measuring international poverty based on national poverty standards and the use of PPP exchange rates to adjust for price differences not reflected in market exchange rates.

18. Since the 1990s, the World Bank has defined the international poverty line based on a sample of national poverty lines in some of the world's poorest countries. In 1991, Ravallion, Datt and van de Walle examined 33 national poverty lines and identified six countries (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kenya, Morocco, Nepal and Tanzania) as among the poorest in the sample, all were within $1 of a poverty line of US$ 31 per person per month at 1985 PPPs. This was the basis for the "dollar-a-day" global poverty line.[9]

19. Estimates of global poverty are regularly updated with new household-survey data and expanding country coverage, albeit with some substantial modifications in data and estimates. These modifications have typically occurred in response to each new ICP price data-collection exercise, and the subsequent release of new PPP exchange rates reflecting the latest information on relative prices across countries. In 2008, price data from the 2005 International Comparison Program data, and new data on national poverty lines, led to a revision of the poverty line upward to $1.25, based on the average of the national poverty lines of 15 of the poorest countries, converted to United States dollars at 2005 PPPs. In 2015, with the 2011 PPPs recently available with revised information on relative prices across countries, the World Bank poverty line was updated again. The value of the same 15 national poverty lines (from the same countries and years) at 2011 PPPs would give an average of $1.88 (rounded to $1.90), which is currently the international poverty line used by the World Bank.

[7] For a discussion of this approach, see Robert Allen, "Absolute poverty: when necessity displaces desire", *American Economic Review*, vol. 107, No. 12 (December 2017), pp. 3690–3721. https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.20161080.

[8] Montek S. Ahluwalia, Nicholas G. Carter and Hollis B. Chenery, "Growth and poverty in developing countries", *Journal of Development Economics*, vol. 6, No. 3 (1979), pp. 299–341.

[9] Martin Ravallion, Gaurav Datt and Dominique van de Walle, "Quantifying absolute poverty in the developing world", *Review of Income and Wealth*, vol. 37, No. 4 (December 1991), pp. 345–361.

Table 1 presents these national lines converted at 2005 and 2011 PPPs. By keeping the national poverty lines the same, the poverty line can be seen as having been fixed with reference to its definition, although its value changed.

Table 1
Re-estimating the $1.25 line at 2005 PPPs, using the 2011 PPPs

Country	*Poverty line year(s)*	*2005 PPP*	*2011 PPP*	*Consumer price index 2011 (2005=100)*	*Poverty line 2005 PPP*	*Poverty line 2011 PPP*
Malawi	2004–2005	56.92	78.02	214.6*	0.86	1.34
Mali	1988–1989	289.68	221.87	119.8	1.38	2.15
Ethiopia	1999–2000	2.75	5.44	297.1	1.35	2.03
Sierra Leone	2003–2004	1 396.21	1 767.19	203.9*	1.69	2.73
Niger	1993	267.33	228.75	116.3	1.10	1.49
Uganda	1993–1998	744.62	946.89	178.0	1.27	1.77
Gambia	1998	10.34	10.83	129.3	1.48	1.82
Rwanda	1999–2001	236.75	246.83	157.8	0.99	1.50
Guinea-Bissau	1991	284.28	248.24	124.8	1.51	2.16
United Republic of Tanzania	2000–2001	482.45	585.52	169.9	0.63	0.88
Tajikistan	1999	0.93	1.88	334.2*	1.93	3.18
Mozambique	2002–2003	11.63	15.53	173.5	0.97	1.26
Chad	1995–1996	327.57	251.30	112.4	0.87	1.28
Nepal	2003–2004	26.47	25.76	164.8	0.87	1.47
Ghana	1998–1999	0.45	0.79	295.2*	1.83	3.07
Mean					**1.25**	**1.88**

Source: Francisco H.G. Ferreira and others, "A global count of the extreme poor in 2012: data issues, methodology and initial results", *Journal of Economic Inequality*, vol. 14, No. 2 (June 2016), pp. 141–172.
Note: Countries marked with an asterisk (*) use a consumer price index that is different from that reported in World Bank, World Development Indicators.

40. This relatively large and heterogeneous revision in the PPPs across countries and regions led to some changes to the poverty numbers at the country level. However, at the global level, updating the poverty line to 2011 PPPs led only to a minor revision, with the global poverty rate for 2011 being revised down from 14.5 per cent (or 1,011 million people) under the old method ($1.25/day at 2005 PPPs), to 14.2 per cent (or 987 million) under the new method ($1.90 at 2011 PPPs). Compared with the incorporation of the 2005 PPPs and update of the international poverty line from $1.08 to $1.25 at corresponding PPPs, the most recent revisions were much smaller.

C. Aligning for aggregate estimates

41. Since survey estimates of poverty are not available for every country every year, producing aggregate poverty estimates for certain years requires some realignment of the data available. Aggregate international poverty estimates for a given reference year are adjusted on the basis of national accounts data on the growth of the economy. For countries where household survey data are not available for the reference year,

growth rates from national accounts data are used to project consumption or income forward or backward as needed to "line up" estimates with reference years so that poverty can be estimated at the same point in time for all countries.

42. National accounts data represent the activities of economic actors — individuals, businesses and government — at the most aggregated level. Usually produced annually, they provide the basis for calculating gross domestic product (GDP) and household final consumption expenditures. National income accounts are highly standardized and widely available at a relatively high frequency. However, growth rates drawn from national accounts and from surveys are known to differ substantially, so that using the line-up method over long periods can cause substantial error and uncertainty in global estimates.

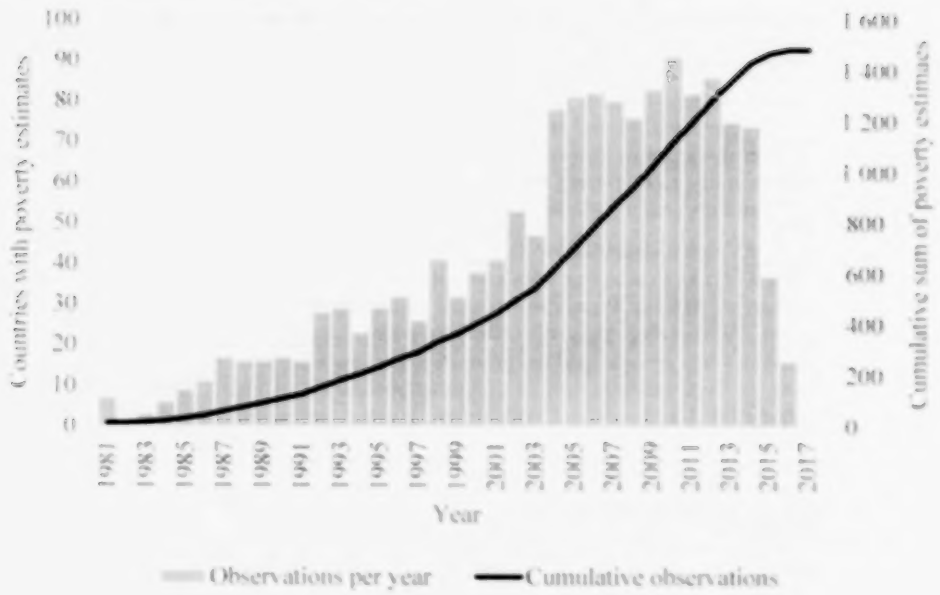
43. As noted, population data are fundamental for ensuring that estimates are representative in terms of both a sample frame and corresponding expansion weights for sample surveys. Population data are also important for ensuring representativeness when aggregating poverty estimates across countries. In aggregating poverty estimates for regional or other groupings of economies and countries, the World Bank uses its own database, which compiles population estimates derived from various international and national collections. It does not aggregate poverty estimates at national poverty lines, because these are not comparable.

V. Data availability and comparability

A. National and international estimates

44. Data for monitoring monetary poverty indicators have become ever more available in recent years (see figure II). The World Bank Poverty and Equity Database contains estimates for 168 countries, and each year for the past decade new estimates have been available for about 80 countries. Poverty estimates are now available for 1,500 country-year observations — more than triple the numbers that were available in the early 2000s. The decline in the availability of estimates for the most recent years was caused by delays between the time when surveys were conducted and the time when the new estimates became available in international databases.

Figure II
Country poverty estimates by year, 1981–2017



Source: Poverty and Equity Database.
Note: Country-level poverty estimates available by year (either at national or at international poverty line), based on tabulation of SI.POV.DDAY and SI.POV.NAHC.NC.

45. Although the volume of poverty statistics has grown rapidly, a number of countries do not have a sufficient number of estimates to enable them to track poverty over time: thorough assessment of country poverty trends requires frequent and comparable data. For example, to assess whether national poverty is rising or falling requires at least two comparable data points within a reasonable interval. Many countries, especially richer ones, have annual estimates available, but for many others, observations are far less frequent. In an effort to address this shortfall, the General Data Dissemination System (GDDS) was developed to serve as a structured process through which member countries of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) commit voluntarily to improving the quality of the data compiled and disseminated by their statistical systems in accordance with a set of recommended standards. As one such standard, the Dissemination System recommends that poverty statistics be updated at least every three to five years, a useful benchmark.[15] Yet of the 193 States Members of the United Nations, 68 (35 per cent) had no poverty estimates available between 2011 and 2015 and another 44 (23 per cent) had only one estimate. About 42 per cent (81) had at least two estimates and could carry out the General Data Dissemination System recommendation.

46. For an assessment of survey data which can be used to estimate recent poverty trends, the data in the Global Database on Shared Prosperity provide useful information. These data require two comparable income or consumption survey

[15] http://dsbb.imf.org/pages/GDDS/TableB.aspx.

estimates within a three- to seven-year period from approximately 2009 to 2014. In the most recent data set, estimates were available for 95 economies, representing about 62 per cent of the world's population, which means that about 38 per cent live in countries where currently it is not possible to track recent poverty trends. Table 2 presents the availability of data for States Members of the United Nations by the regions and groups used in the Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use maintained by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat. There is a significant lack of availability in poorer regions: 81 per cent of the developed countries have enough data to calculate poverty trends, but in Africa just under 30 per cent (16 of 54 countries, representing 35 per cent of the population) have enough of such data. Among least developed countries, surveys from 14 of 48 countries represent just 41 per cent of the population.

Table 2
Availability of data for comparing poverty trends, by region or grouping, in the approximate period 2009–2014

Region or grouping (Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use (M49))	*Number/percentage of countries with data*	*Share of population represented in data (percentage)*
Africa	16/54 (30%)	35
Americas	17/35 (49%)	89
Asia	21/47 (45%)	58
Europe	38/43 (88%)	99
Oceania	1/14 (7%)	2
Least developed countries	14/48 (29%)	41
Developed countries	39/48 (81%)	84
Developing countries	54/145 (37%)	57
Total States Members of the United Nations	93/193 **(48%)**	**62**

Note: Based on data available in the Global Database on Shared Prosperity, circa 2009–2014 (http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/brief/global-database-of-shared-prosperity). The database tracks annualized consumption or income growth of the bottom 40 per cent for each country. The database contains estimates for 95 economies, 93 of which are States Members of the United Nations, used in this analysis. The analysis uses the classification of countries by Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use (M49). Population numbers are for 2015 or are the latest available (from World Bank, World Development Indicators).

B. Data quality and comparability

47. Although data availability has improved, the availability of comparable estimates for tracking recent poverty trends remains limited. When surveys are not comparable over time, they cannot be relied on for monitoring poverty trends. Differences in how surveys are conducted over time limits comparability. Often, as economies evolve, surveys are updated to better capture consumption patterns; survey changes may also be introduced for other reasons, such as budget requirements. Questionnaires are often changed with the intent of improving measurement, but, often, little consideration is given to the possibility of creating non-comparable series.

48. Changes to questionnaires can have substantial impact on poverty estimates and make it difficult to answer simple questions, regarding, for example, whether or not

poverty has declined. In an experiment conducted in the United Republic of Tanzania, for instance, different consumption questionnaires were randomly assigned to different subsamples.[20] The experiment found that large variations in measured consumption and the resulting poverty estimates could be attributed to the differences in the questionnaires. For example, changing the recall period for consumption from one week to two (while leaving everything else the same) pushed up poverty headcount estimates in the experimental sample from 55 to 63 per cent. Other differences in questionnaires — for example, with respect to the extensiveness of the list of consumption items queried, or the order in which items are listed — have also been found to compromise comparability.[21]

49. To improve comparability, statistical techniques such as survey-to-survey imputation can sometimes be used to overcome challenges generated by changes in questionnaires.[22] Alternatively, experimental design can be utilized to help both assess the effect of changes in household surveys and restore comparability. Increasingly, statistical offices, when making substantial changes to questionnaires, are advised to introduce experimental design, in order to assess more precisely how those changes impact measures.[23]

50. Differences in survey methods and questionnaires are even larger across countries. Some degree of post-harmonization can be carried out, but many differences are irreconcilable. Several initiatives designed to harmonize survey design practices attempt to improve comparability between countries, but such harmonization can compromise comparability within countries. Ultimately, countries and international agencies that are considering questionnaire changes need to be well aware of the trade-offs.

VI. Poverty statistics: the way forward

51. Throughout the world, there has already been considerable progress made in both measuring and combating poverty, but expanding demands for both international and national reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals are likely to lead to a similar expansion of the requirements.

A. Leaving no one behind: new expectations for poverty statistics

52. While disaggregated reporting "by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)" may be central to the Sustainable Development Goal commitment to leaving no one behind, it still raises numerous problems related to poverty statistics, which are usually measured at the household level and based on the assumption that resources are distributed equally within households.

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[20] Kathleen Beegle and others, "Methods of household consumption measurement through surveys", *Journal of Development Economics*, vol. 98, No. 1 (May 2012), pp. 3–18.

[21] *Household Sample Surveys in Developing and Transition Countries*, Studies in Methods, Series F, No. 96 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.XVII.6). Available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/hhsurveys/pdf/Household_surveys.pdf.

[22] For an early example of survey-to-survey imputation, see Andrew Gelman, Gary King, and Chuanhai Liu, "Not asked and not answered: multiple imputation for multiple surveys", *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, vol. 93, No. 443 (September 1998), pp. 846–857.

[23] Roger Tourangeau, "Recurring surveys: issues and opportunities" (2003), report to the National Science Foundation, based on a workshop held on 28 and 29 March 2003. Available at https://www.nsf.gov/sbe/ses/mms/nsf04_211a.pdf.

53. In the report entitled *Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2016: Taking on Inequality*, the World Bank published subgroup estimates for children (age groups 0–4, 5–9, 10–14 and 15–17), rural/urban residence, and some occupations and is now working to make disaggregated reporting the standard. However, lack of comparable definitions of groups surveyed can undermine comparability. For example, countries often define rural and urban areas differently, and surveys may also capture employment status in very different ways. Ex-post harmonization of definitions and survey instruments thus becomes important for ensuring the comparability of both domestic and international poverty statistics.

54. Data limitations make sex disaggregation of poverty statistics difficult. For example, the World Bank has so far not been reporting poverty statistics by sex (male/female), as suggested under the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Commission on Global Poverty. Consumption and income information is usually collected for the household as a whole. Some data may be collected on individual incomes, but many aspects of consumption are difficult to disaggregate by individuals, much less by sex. Thus, estimates of income and consumption distributions used for poverty measurement typically ignore intra-household inequalities, assigning to everyone in the household the same level of material welfare. In particular, sex-disaggregated poverty statistics that assume equal sharing within households can be deeply misleading. Experimental approaches are currently under way to better capture within-household inequalities.

55. Another measurement problem posed by the Sustainable Development Goals is inherent in the goal of eradicating poverty by 2030 as measured by the international poverty line. The target of ensuring that, by this measure, no one lives in extreme poverty makes it crucial that surveys capture the people who are marginalized, homeless or otherwise not likely to be part of standard samples. For example, where 30 per cent of the population is poor, excluding 3 per cent of the population from the sample because they are hard to reach may not fundamentally change the general national profile of poverty, although the sample would not be fully representative. For the Sustainable Development Goal target, capturing the entire population, especially marginalized groups that are likely to be poorer than the rest of the population, is fundamental to assessing whether poverty is indeed being eradicated.

56. Similarly, as discussed in section V, in several countries, especially low-income countries and conflict-affected or fragile States where poverty tends to be pervasive, data needed for poverty measurement are often dated, sparse or not available at all. Unlike the Millennium Development Goals, the Sustainable Development Goals are explicitly global in coverage; hence, efforts to better collect national poverty measures from high-income countries have begun. Many high-income countries do not have official national poverty lines but instead rely on regional standards, such as the Eurostat relative poverty measures. Although, traditionally, United Nations and World Bank measurement of international poverty has focused on low- and middle-income countries, the Sustainable Development Goals have stimulated new ways of thinking. Recently, rather than assume that there is no extreme poverty in high-income countries, as assessed by the international poverty line, World Bank aggregation has included survey estimates from high-income countries. However, because many of these countries use income as the monetary indicator of welfare, surveys conducted for those countries often report zero incomes, which yields poverty rates that may not be comparable with estimates based on consumption.

B. Monitoring poverty in all its dimensions

57. That the Sustainable Development Goals focus on ending poverty not only for all groups but also *in all its forms and dimensions*, attests to the recognition that poverty manifests itself in many ways. As already noted, so far, national and international approaches to monitoring poverty have measured mainly monetary poverty. However, many countries are also systematically monitoring other facets of poverty, such as the health, nutrition and education dimensions; and some have aggregated several dimensions into single measures of multidimensional poverty, often with a focus on "overlapping dimensions". The report of the Commission on Global Poverty emphasized the need for a portfolio of "complementary indicators" to be monitored along with the monetary poverty estimates. It suggests both a dashboard of such indicators and a measure of overlapping dimensions.

58. Because the Sustainable Development Goals set the target and indicators for measuring poverty in multiple dimensions in terms of national definitions, it is likely that the measures and methods used by countries will vary considerably, as do the methods and data used for tracking national monetary poverty. Further work will be necessary to ensure comprehensive documentation and a system of reporting of such statistics, and to assess the degree of international coordination that will be necessary in this regard.

C. Improving data availability and quality

59. While, today, the availability of international poverty statistics is greater, and their quality better, than ever before, the data gaps and the complexity of ensuring comparability suggest that there is considerable room for improvement. More frequent and more complete coverage of multi-topic household surveys will be an important first step, but in order to ensure that poverty estimates are more reliable and more comparable, attention should be paid not just to the quantity of surveys but also to their quality, accessibility and comparability.

60. For improved data quality, efforts will need to continue to focus on improved standards and training in the collection of household surveys; but there is also a need to expand efforts to test new technologies such as the recording of locations and land area with handheld Global Positioning System (GPS) devices, tablet-based questionnaires, integration of geospatial satellite data, and other innovations for improving data quality.[24] When data of good quality are not openly accessible, the ability of the data to inform policy discussion and debates is severely hindered. While the global community has placed emphasis on the importance of open data, even greater efforts are needed to push this agenda forward and create a common understanding of what the term *openly accessible data* really signifies. While such efforts may seem straightforward, countries in fact follow very different approaches to access. Some provide full public and immediate online access to their microdata; others may provide access to microdata after review and approval or after a fee has been paid. Regrettably, it is still the case that many countries continue to release data

[24] See chap. 5, entitled "National profiles of poverty and shared prosperity, data, and measurement issues", in World Bank, *A Measured Approach to Ending Poverty and Boosting Shared Prosperity: Concepts, Data, and the Twin Goals* (Washington, D.C., 2015). http://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/book/10.1596/978-1-4648-0361-1.

only in processed tabular form, or not at all. The full value of survey data for improving poverty policy can be realized only through open access to the data.

61. Comparability is an issue of great importance for countries trying to monitor change over time or differences across diverse areas or across subsamples of their population. Comparability across countries also helps improve the scope for learning from experiences of neighbouring countries, and better allows for global assessments of progress in poverty reduction. To this end, the Intersecretariat Working Group on Household Surveys, whose establishment was endorsed by the Statistical Commission at its forty-sixth session in 2015 (see E/2015/24, chap. I, sect. C, decision 46/105), is making an important contribution. The Intersecretariat Working Group aims at fostering coordination and harmonization of household survey activities and improving the comparability and internal coherence of surveys both in a given country and across countries. Also relevant to the efforts to improve quality and comparability of poverty estimates based on consumption and expenditure data is the work of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Agricultural and Rural Statistics, which has developed guidelines for measuring food consumption and expenditures in household consumption and expenditure surveys, to be presented to the Statistical Commission at its forty-ninth session.[25] Such efforts to set standards and document good practice will be crucial to improving quality.

62. It is also important to accept the fact that estimates are almost by definition uncertain. The Commission on Global Poverty recommends that a "total error" approach be adopted in international poverty monitoring, which would recognize that there are a number of sources of imprecision, such as inaccuracies in population statistics, sample frames, and the growth rates used to bring poverty estimates to a common reference year; inaccuracies in the estimation of PPP exchange rates and national consumer price indices; and problems arising from variations in the methods used in different countries. Thus, the precise number of the poor in the world can be estimated only with some degree of uncertainty, as would be expected from such a large and dispersed statistical exercise.

D. Investing in more and better data

63. Conducting good household surveys for measuring poverty is both difficult and costly: it requires political commitment, professional capacity and adequate resources. It is estimated that conducting multi-topic household surveys for monitoring poverty in 78 of the poorest countries (390 surveys in total) will cost US$ 945 million every three years between 2016 and 2030.[26] A much larger sum will be needed to properly track the Sustainable Development Goal poverty indicators in all countries, especially to obtain data that can be disaggregated so as to provide a more complete picture and ensure that nobody is left behind.

64. In addition to financial resources, improved coordination between the donors who support surveys could increase the availability of poverty data.[27] Development organizations such as the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the

[25] See the report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on agricultural and rural statistics (E/CN.3/2018/13).

[26] Talip Kilic and others, "Costing household surveys for monitoring progress toward ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity", World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, No. 7951 (Washington, D.C., World Bank, January 2017).

[27] Umar Serajuddin and others, "Data deprivation: another deprivation to end", World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, No. 7252 (Washington, D.C., World Bank, April 2015).

21st Century (PARIS21) encourage countries to prepare national strategies for the development of statistics, which can in turn inform donor investments. Such strategies typically include plans for regular household surveys. If national strategies for the development of statistics are implemented as intended, the frequency of production of poverty data can be increased through better coordination of survey instruments, without necessarily affecting overall survey costs.

65. Resources are fundamental to collecting more data, but are not alone sufficient. Country statistical capacity in survey questionnaire and sampling design, fieldwork management, data quality control, and data curation, analysis and dissemination is essential to informing evidence-based and data-driven efforts to eradicate poverty. In tae building of statistical capacity to meet the standard of international best practices, incorporating emerging, validated, innovative and cost-effective data-collection solutions, there must be recognition of the need to improve both household survey data and complementary data, e.g., on population and prices, if poverty statistics are to be meaningful.

VII. Action required by the Statistical Commission

66. The Statistical Commission is invited to take note of the present report.